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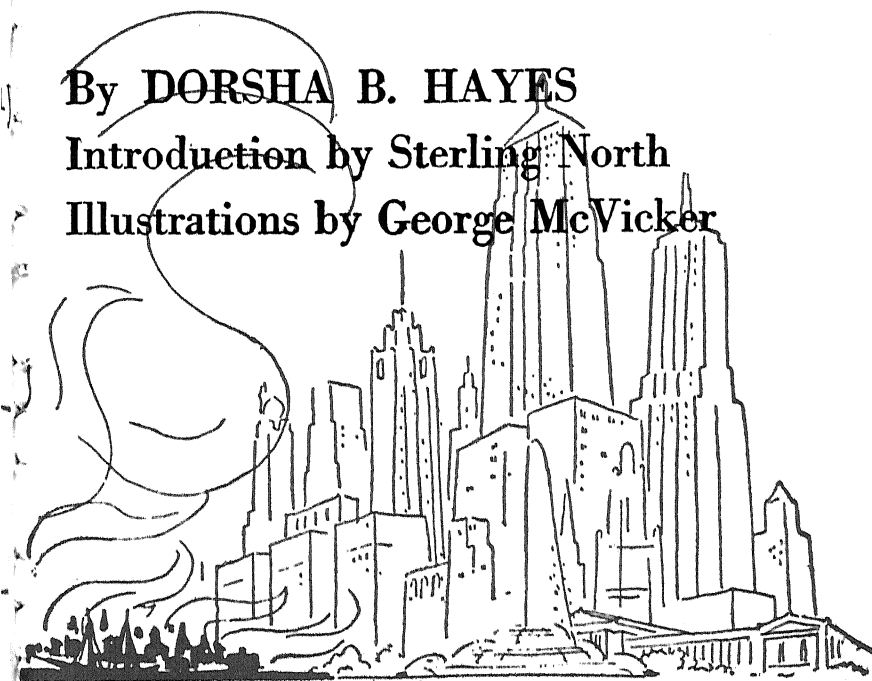
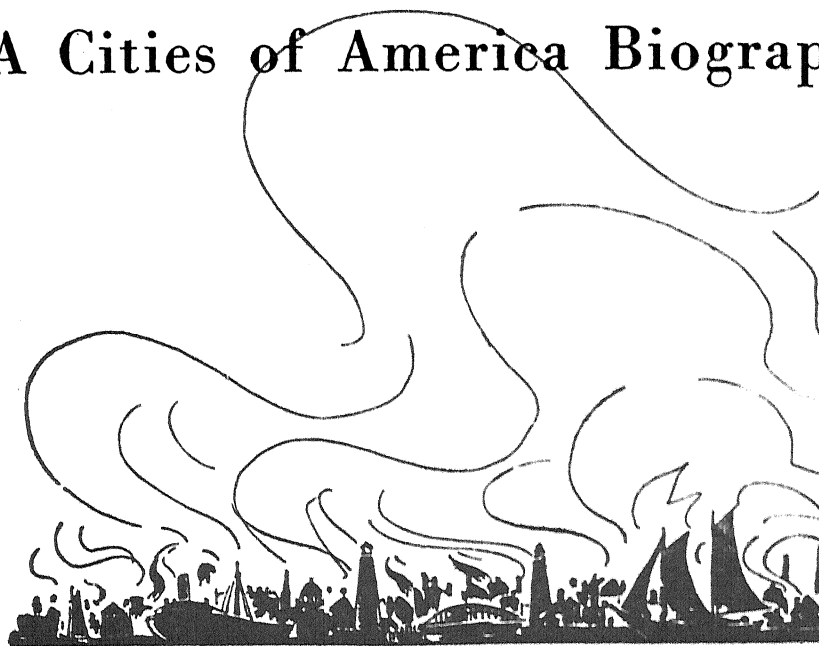
CROSSROADS OF AMERICAN ENTERPRISE

A Cities of America Biograph

By DORSHA B. HAYES

Introduction by Sterling North

Illustrations by George McVicker



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VII
TO
ON

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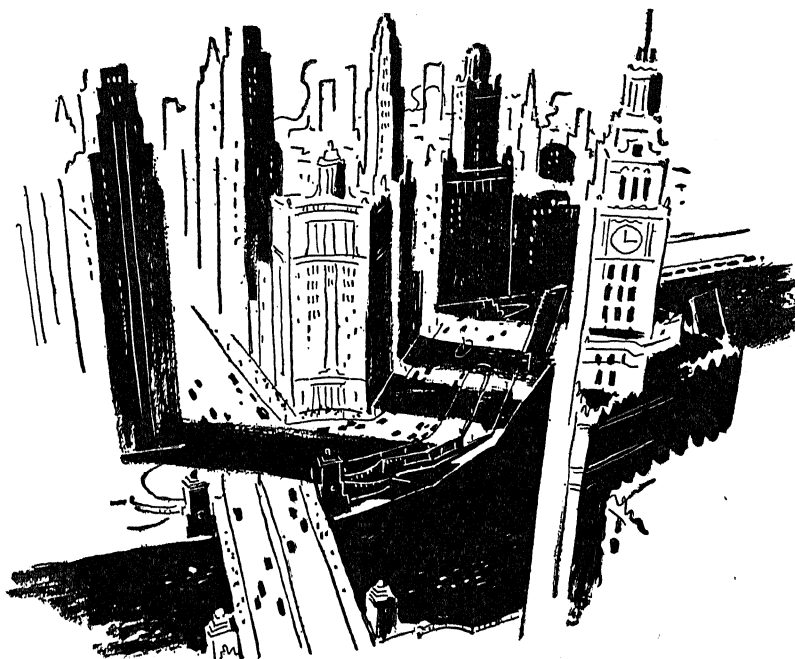
I wish to express my gratitude for that unfailing Chicago spirit of warm-hearted friendliness which I met wherever I turned, seeking source material for this book. To those gracious people who placed private papers, privately printed brochures, old books and family records at my disposal, I am much indebted, and to the helpfulness both of The Chicago Historical Society and to the Chicago Association of Commerce.

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DORSHA B. HAYES.

Foreword



WITHIN five hundred miles of Chicago are the coal, iron, oil and black top-soil, the hydro-electric power, the universities, libraries and book stores—and yes, the men to produce the greatest culture on earth, perhaps the greatest in history.

I love Chicago. During fourteen years as reporter and book reviewer on the *Chicago Daily News* I saw the best and the worst the city has to offer. As night police reporter coming to work on the “El” at two in the morning, feature writer covering every sort of assignment from golden weddings to gang funerals and Literary Editor entertaining the visiting literary firemen, I know Chicago from her libraries and museums to her unspeakable slums.

There is always a high wind blowing in Carl Sandburg's Windy City. A sense of impending storm, like the approaching moment in a good poem when your beard stiffens.

There is always the feeling of being in a vortex. Anything could happen in Chicago—and history shows that it has. An astonishingly bloody Indian massacre; an unsurpassed population growth; real-estate booms which rival those in Florida; a fire which threw a ruddy glow of favorable (or at least sympathy-gaining) publicity around the world; two World Fairs in defiance of depressions; labor killings, race riots, gang warfare—all in grandiose proportions. There is nothing subtle about Chicago's history—not even the remarks made by Oscar Wilde, Max Beerbohm and Rudyard Kipling concerning her reputation.

But even her most caustic detractors have been fascinated by Chicago. The ore boats loaded with the black and red wealth of the Menominee, Gogebic and Mesabi iron ranges come down the lake. Laramie sends caravans of freight cars loaded with sheep. Boatloads of newsprint from Canada dock beside skyscrapers where the presses rumble. From Seattle come trains of spruce and pine. California sends tens of thousands of crates of lemons cradled in ice. Out of Wichita come box cars groaning with winter wheat, golden argosies from the endless prairies.

They all put their nickels in the slot. They say: "This is what we have to offer; we need new radios, combine threshers, schoolbooks, dynamos, steam shovels, steel rails, bacon, pajamas. What do you say, Chicago?"

And Chicago says, "Okay, Laramie, Seattle, Wichita; it's on the way."

For the moment the "Dream Books" put out by Sears Roebuck and Montgomery Ward may lack a few essentials. War orders may crowd out domestic in the steel mills (throwing their glow against the sky at the south end of the lake). But after the war a city enlarged by hundreds of thousands,

equipped with vast new factories, will be ready for anything the post-war world may need.

In 1848 they brought the funny little wood-burning engine *The Pioneer* to Chicago on the deck of a sailing ship. Even after it arrived people were doubtful. Today Chicago is America's greatest railroad center, spider-webs of steel criss-cross the city, twine and inter-twine. A dozen railroad lines shunt cattle cars down innumerable sidings. Live stock worth millions on the hoof plunges, squeals, bleats, pounds its thousands of hoofs on acres of wooden floors. Tank cars and pipe lines at Whiting, slag cars and coal cars at Indiana Harbor, flatcars for tanks, box cars for airplane motors, refrigerator cars for fruit and meat—giant muscles of steel flex, ready to juggle the freight of the world.

This is the age of steel.

Machinery has become the poetry of the metropolis.

A piston slipping smoothly in and out of a cylinder drives heavy wheels. Curved metal, polished disks, levers and planes move at a tremendous speed—intricately adjusted to the fraction of a second—and perform the slide-rule miracles of modern industry.

And this industry may be either the master or the servant of man. In the past it has too often been the master. Visit the crime-infested regions "back of the yards," drive along endless Halsted Street, have a look at West Madison and South Clark, listen to the soap-box orators in "Bug-House" Square, talk to the social workers at Hull House. From Little Italy to the Gold Coast is only a step, and yet living conditions vary from incredible poverty to ostentatious wealth. Here is the breeding ground for post-war strife.

Fortunately, Dorsha Hayes is keenly aware of the many problems facing Chicago. She has clearer vision in these matters than nine out of ten of the writers who have written about the city. And if she is romantically inclined toward such source material as the highly-colored "Wau-Bun," she

is very clear-headed when it comes to what is known as "labor" troubles.

It must be remembered, however, that from the arrival of the first canoe, Chicago has been a controversial subject.

For instance:

There is a possibility—even a probability—that Pierre Esprit Radisson saw the marshy site of Chicago before Marquette and Joliet made their famous visit. If you will read the Radisson journals in their curious English and even more curious French in the archives at Ottawa you will be convinced that American historians should take heed of the remarkable footnote in the Champlain edition of Francis Parkman's collected works. Parkman intimates that had he discovered Radisson's Journals earlier in his career he might have rewritten many passages in his history of New France. At this point even the amateur historical sleuth begins to ask himself whether the seventy-odd volumes of the Jesuit *Relations* are not a biased source of information.

I mention this in passing only to show what difficulties any historian faces in writing a history of Chicago. From the *Relations* to the *Chicago Tribune* much of the evidence is warped with bigotry and prejudice. No two historians have agreed exactly on the Pullman strike, for instance. Passion still runs high on the trial of the anarchists accused of throwing a bomb among the policemen in the Haymarket tragedy. My own sympathies are those expressed by Dorsha Hayes.

I particularly like her handling of the copperhead press during both the Civil War and the current one. I like her chapter on Lincoln, worthy of a city which produced Sandburg. I like her handling of such remote sources of fascism as the No-Nothing movement, and her understanding of Pullman, the first Marshall Field, the Swifts and the Armours. She knows literature, music, the theater, architecture and city planning. And more than most authors who have written about the city, she gives both sides of the great controversial events and problems which have often torn the town asunder.

I have always felt that Chicago is capable of producing a literary, artistic, yet even a political renaissance whose effects would be felt all over America. But any such renaissance is running a stiff race with the forces of reaction. The secret admirers of Hitler move quietly in Chicago. The enemies of the intellect, the saboteurs of culture, the defeatists, the evil old men, throw their shadow across the sun. Young men and women must labor mightily to overcome these figures out of Goya and Daumier. And this book is a major step in the right direction. Invariably entertaining and pleasantly instructive, the book has a greater *raison d'être* than "just another book about Chicago." It is aimed at the sensitive, responsive, socially conscious coming generation which must produce a greater city at the foot of Lake Michigan.

STERLING NORTH.

Morristown, N. J.
December, 1943

CHICAGO

CROSSROADS OF AMERICAN ENTERPRISE

Chapter One

BUT HALF A LEAGUE OF PRAIRIE



They came in bark canoes

MAY, 1673....

They came in bark canoes, you remember, seeking—
What were they seeking?

Officially, a way to China. Imperial power. The wealth of commerce. Specifically, the great river that would lead them to that goal.

Just greed and glory?

No, you have to count in that human urge to progress, to go further, to explore. It's a queer, strong urge that grips some men and leads them into what can seem like certain death, and often is; men with the bravery to back a dream, to

go ahead alone and take the risks. Marquette and Joliet were two such men. And count in that simple, self-obliterating longing to do good which shone out bright in Père Marquette.

They could have said what they were seeking, stated it quite simply, eagerly. There are always reasons. And maybe back of the reasons, a force pushing, a natural law of growth that works in man without his knowing and bears him forward without regard for all his able little planning, plunging him into discoveries before he finds the reasons for them. It was just the river they were looking for, you remember.

A great river that the Indians said was there, a river that might lead—oh, where might it not lead!—to the Vermillion Sea, to China! Yet these two were not so naïve as another of those early seekers who, voyaging as far as Green Bay, brought along a robe of Chinese silk that he might be dressed correctly on arrival!

There would be many souls to save. . . . Marquette dreamed of this, yearned for it. Moving between missions in the wilderness outposts, at St. Esprit de Chequanegon and at St. Ignace at Michilimackinac, he readied himself for just this task. He talked with other men, black-robed like himself, the waving, gentle candlelight glowing on rapt faces with bright, shining eyes. He talked with sturdy, weathered traders who came and went, holding the circle by the firelight while they shared their gain of knowledge with the listeners. And he talked with Indians, from whom so much must be learned, language and custom, this tribe and that, if one had any hope to go among them, win their trust.

Yes, Marquette readied himself so that he might be fit if only, God willing, he might be picked to spread God's love among those unknown nations by the great river to the west. And Joliet picked him; Joliet, a man chosen by a governor to lead so great an expedition, a competent, trustworthy man, experienced. Marquette moved forward in a spell of joy, dreaming of God's kingdom.

He wrote in his Journal at the outset:

“We were not long in preparing all our equipment although we were about to begin a voyage, the duration of which we could not foresee. Indian corn, with some smoked meat, constituted all our provisions; with these we embarked—Monsieur Jolliet and myself with five men—in two bark canoes, fully resolved to do and suffer everything for so glorious an undertaking. Accordingly on the 17th of May, 1673, we started from the Mission of St. Ignace at Michilimackinac where I then was. The joy that we felt at being selected for this expedition animated our courage and rendered the labor of paddling from morning to night agreeable to us.”

They came out from the Straits of Mackinac and along the northern shores of Lake Michigan heading west, that most hopeful point of the compass in those days and for many after. On down the west shore of Green Bay they came, Louis Joliet, Canadian-born Frenchman, twenty-eight years old, and Jacques Marquette, the black-gowned Jesuit, born in France thirty-six years before. With them were another Frenchman and four Indians.

A canoe goes smoothly, responsive to the paddle. You feel the glide answering to the stroke. And there's a rhythm to it, not machine, a rhythm that would fit in with singing. May on the lakes has chill, misty mornings, damp with the fresh-water smell, but the sun, getting up, burns the mist into dissolving patches and glows warm on your back. Timber country. The firs come tangled to the water's edge, cedar and hemlock and tall Northern pine; dark and silent trees that sough only in a strong wind; fragrant, scenting the moist cool breeze. The Green Bay shore slips by—gray rock ledges, moss-bitten, with bluebells and buttercups waving in the crannies, a stretch of yellow beach in a cove. Birds wheel and caw and dip, a kingfisher's blue flashing bright in the morning sun. Many birds—so many then. And the quiet-footed, ever-wary creatures slipping through the mottled shade of tangled growth to drink cool, clear water at the lake edge.

The canoes fit in with silence, no more sound to them than the tread of a doe in the lapping waters of a shallow beach, and with care taken, less than that. Back at the Mission, at the Fort, at the Court of Louis, men had talked freely and with animation, voices breaking in on one another. But not now. This was wilderness. If we who wander into the countryside on holiday, being city-bred, can feel the vast quiet coming down on us, standing alone in woods or field, how much more so these seven men in two canoes in country that the Indians still thought was theirs?

Other men had been before them here, some who left careful records telling just how far they had gone and all that they had seen. But there were others who had left no records. Many were the lone-wolf trappers who slipped silently into the forest, traveled the Indian trails on foot, and came back—if they did come back—with a wealth of furs. Over what country these adventurers ranged, north, south or west, no one knows today, but they may often have been the first to come upon a great body of water, a range of mountains.

Father Claude Allouez, that tireless man who seems to have been ever on the move, journeying to Lake Superior and down into Wisconsin, zealously founding one mission after another, was brought to Green Bay by Indians of the Pottawatomie tribe "to curb some young Frenchman who, being among them for the purpose of trading, was threatening and maltreating them."

These nameless young Frenchmen turned up at one point or another, far in the wilderness, and won mention in the journals that were kept. But many who wandered far have left no history. It is from the record-keepers that we learn.

The St. Lawrence River opened a westward route to the French before the landing of the Pilgrims. Champlain had founded a colony at Quebec in 1608. In 1615, he penetrated to Lake Huron and heard stories of the fresh water seas beyond. By 1634, Frenchmen were deep in the continent a

thousand miles; Green Bay had been explored. A Jesuit letter of 1640 reads:

"Sieur Nicolet, who had advanced farthest into these so distant countries, has assured me that if he had sailed three days' journey further upon a great river which issues from the lake, he would have found the sea."

What lake? What river? Had Nicolet heard stories of the Mississippi? Raddison, no doubt, had crossed its upper reaches. Perot was aware that it existed. In 1669, Allouez was writing of the great river by the name we call it now, while Lake Michigan, passed by in the westward urge, was little known and called by many names—the Lake of the Ilimonk, Lake of the Ill-i-ni-oues, Match-i-hi-gan-ong, Mixcigan.

Yet, though they knew that it was there, no one had claimed discovery of the great river.

The two canoes worked their way southward, down to the foot of the Bay, along the water trails that led to Lake Winnebago, then south and west of that until they came to a spot that is now marked by the town of Berlin, Wisconsin. Here there was an Indian settlement. Marquette's Journal notes:

"Here we are at the Mascoutins. This word may, in Algonquin, mean 'The Fire Nation,' which indeed is the name given to this tribe. Here is the limit of the discoveries which the French have made, for they have not gone any further."

They stopped in the Indian settlement, receiving courtesy and returning it. Menominees, Miamis, Kickapoos, and those of the Fire Nation were their friends. They held counsel together, white men and Indians, with dignity and grace on both sides. Courtesy was paid to the Indian customs and likewise to the Christian faith, so well represented by the gentle Marquette. Reading his Journal, you know him to be a man consumed with love, in whose devotion there was only tenderness and exaltation with none of that blind, condemn-

ing harshness of the zealot. He loved the Indians. They must have felt that power within him and been gentled by it.

The white men were seeking a river? Yes, it lay to the west, the Indians knew where. But it would be dangerous to seek it. There were bad tribes along the river. Heat of a smiting nature would be encountered. In the river itself there was a great serpent. Once that serpent had set out to visit the Great Lakes. As he crawled over the land, he left a winding trail. That trail was now the river on which one could go to the great river from which the serpent had come. But it would be dangerous. It was better not to go.

Well . . . if the white fathers would go, then they should have guides to set them on the way. Two of the Miami tribe would show them how to go.

They went on—this time into uncharted country. Now there were shallow rivers with boulders that could rip the bottom out of a canoe, sharp rocks that cut and bruised the wading feet when men stepped out to tow. There were wide swamps where wild rice grew tall and shut them in. It rose so high above their heads they could not see where they were going, and there was no one clear stream to follow, but many and confusing waterpaths among the reeds. There were portages to make, canoes emptied and lifted overhead, equipment packed upon the back and adding to the burden. There were poisonous snakes to guard against in treading over twisting, snakelike roots.

But were they not doing the thing that they most wished to do? The labor and the risks were nothing. They were to be expected. Besides, at this mild season of the year with game plentiful, friendly Indians as guides, great hope ahead. . . .

Entering the Wisconsin River, the guides turned back, the seven men were left to their adventure. They paddled on, moving swiftly. Soon, now, soon. . . .

And there it was, just as the Indians had said. There it was, the Great River, and no knowing where it might flow. . . .

"We safely entered Mississippi on the 17th of June with a joy that I cannot express."

Gliding down that vast slow current, they came into the treeless prairie country. They saw herds of buffalo, four hundred in a herd, and great flocks of birds of many kinds. But they saw no Indians. Where were the hostile tribes that they had been warned against? At night they built only a small fire upon the river bank on which to cook their supper, and they kept a guard. By day their eyes were on the shore, ever watchful. They knew what hostile Indians could do. There had been trouble enough back in Iroquois country, whole colonies wiped out, white men kidnaped, tortured, killed. Black-gowns had been burned at the stake. But, knowing martyrdom might be his lot, Marquette went forward in serene content. Danger—? "The salvation of souls was at stake for which I would be delighted to give my life."

"I took pleasure in observing. . . . It is very beautiful and very pleasing. . . . We joyfully plied our paddles. . . ." Such expressions recur again and again in Marquette's story and give us a good idea of his character. A man shows himself in what he writes. It is too bad that Joliet's Journal has not come down to us. We would know him better if it had. His Journal was lost in the overturning of his canoe at the very end of the trip, but Joliet was known to be so trustworthy a man that his word was accepted on every detail of that voyage. Yet without his say-so, we can be sure there must have been a harmony between these two, Marquette and Joliet. Without that good companionship, could the gentle, large-eyed Marquette have been so happily at peace?

On the 25th of June:

"We perceived on the water's edge some tracks of men and a narrow and somewhat beaten path leading to a fine prairie. We stopped to examine it, and thinking that it was a road which led to some village of savages, we resolved to go and reconnoiter it. We, therefore, left our two canoes under the guard of our people, strictly charging them not

to allow themselves to be surprised, after which Monsieur Jollyet and I undertook the investigation—a rather hazardous one for two men who exposed themselves alone, to the mercy of a barbarous and unknown people.

“We silently followed the narrow path, and after walking about two leagues” (that is, about six miles) “we discovered a village on the banks of a river and two others on a hill distant about half a league from the first. Then we heartily commended ourselves to God, and after imploring His aid, we went further without being perceived, and approached so near that we could even hear the savages talking. We, therefore, decided that it was time to reveal ourselves. This we did by shouting with all our energy, and stopped, without advancing any further.

“On hearing the shout, the savages quickly issued from their cabins and having probably recognized us as Frenchmen, especially when they saw a black-gown—or at least having no cause for distrust, as we were only two men, and had given them notice of our arrival—they deputed four old men to come and speak to us. Two of them bore tobacco pipes, finely ornamented and adorned with various feathers. They walked slowly, and raised their pipes toward the sun, seemingly offering them to it to smoke, without, however, saying a word. They spent a rather long time in covering the short distance between their village and us. Finally, when they had drawn near, they stopped to observe us attentively.

“I was reassured when I observed these ceremonies, which with them are performed only among friends . . . I, therefore, spoke to them first, and asked them who they were. They replied that they were the Illinois, and as a token of peace, they offered us their pipes to smoke. They afterward invited us to enter their village, where all the people impatiently awaited us.

“At the door of the cabin in which we were to be received was an old man, who awaited us in a rather surprising atti-

tude, which constitutes a part of the ceremonial that they observe when they receive strangers. This man stood erect and stark naked, with his hands extended and lifted toward the sun, as if he wished to protect himself from its rays, which nevertheless shone upon his face through his fingers. When we came near him, he paid us this compliment: 'How beautiful the sun is, O Frenchmen, when thou comest to visit us! All our village awaits thee and thou shalt enter all our cabins in peace.'

"Having said this, he made us enter his own, in which were a crowd of people; they devoured us with their eyes, but, nevertheless, observed profound silence. We could, however, hear these words which were addressed to us from time to time in a low voice: 'How good it is, my brothers, that you should visit us.'

"After we had taken our places, the usual civility of the country was paid to us, which consisted in offering us the calumet. This must not be refused, unless one wishes to be considered an enemy, or at least uncivil; it suffices that one makes a pretense of smoking. While all the elders smoked after us, in order to do us honor, we received an invitation on behalf of the great captain of all the Illinois to proceed to his village where he wished to hold a council with us.

"We went thither in a large company, for all of these people, who had never seen any Frenchmen among them, could not cease looking at us. They lay on the grass along the road; they preceded us and then retraced their steps to come and see us again. All this was done noiselessly, and with marks of great respect to us."

Marquette and Joliet were the guests of the chief, sleeping that night in his hut. For them an elaborate calumet dance was performed, of which Marquette wrote: "This is done so well, with slow and measured steps and to the rhythmic sound of the voices and drums, that it might pass for a very fine opening of a ballet in France."

Looking with interest all about him, noting conscientiously

all that he observed, the large gentle eyes of Père Marquette saw much of beauty and of excellence, and it pleased him mightily to set it down, even to the words of a song, adding: "They give it a certain turn which cannot be sufficiently expressed by note, but which, nevertheless, constitutes all its grace."

One cannot help regretting deeply that there were not more white men possessed of Marquette's real interest in the Indians, his sincere concern for their well-being, his tolerance for their different ways, his appreciation for their arts, his desire to come among them as a friend. True, his intention was to alter their religious faith, teaching them his belief and doing away with their own. Yet one cannot imagine that he would have used coercion if his intention failed. With his approach, it is even hard to imagine that he could have failed. His education and his culture, along with his loving-kindness, gave him an insight and an understanding of the Indians.

If there had been more like him we might believe that the Indian tragedy could have been avoided.

Having made the acquaintance of the Illinois Indians, Marquette and Joliet went on their way. They voyaged down the Mississippi as far as the Arkansas River. Having made certain that the Mississippi flowed into the Gulf of Mexico, they turned back, for they did not want to run the risk of falling into the hands of their enemies, the Spaniards, whom they knew to be in the region of the Gulf.

Coming up river, breasting the current, the two canoes turned off into the Illinois River. This, the Indians had told them, would provide them with a shorter route.

"We have seen nothing like this river we enter, as regards its fertility of soil, its prairies, its woods, its cattle, elk, deer, wildcat, bustards, swans, ducks, paroquets, and even beaver." Of the Indians, the Journal notes: "They live by hunting, game being plentiful in that country, and on Indian corn of

which they always have a good crop; consequently, they have never suffered famine."

Up the Illinois they came, on into the Des Plaines, and crossed the portage into the south branch of the Chicago River.

"One of the chiefs of this nation, with his young men, escorted us to the Lake of the Illinois."

They had found the route between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi. Out of that discovery would rise the great city of Chicago.

The Indians had begged him to come back. He would go back, joyfully. He would found a mission on the Illinois River and live among these friendly people, telling them of God.

That dream filled Marquette's heart. That he was ailing, that he had been forced to spend months recuperating at the Mission of St. Francis Xavier, which Father Allouez had founded on Green Bay, and that the season was late, were obstacles that he would not consider. Far off in Quebec, Joliet was telling of the discovery, seeking to impress its importance on the minds of those who managed the affairs of New France and sought to extend its empire; seeking also to win the leadership of yet another expedition, well-deserved by the success of this one. But it is doubtful if Marquette's thought turned much on those matters, or if he fully realized, as Joliet did, the value to New France of the route they had discovered. He wrote in his Journal that if the voyage had "resulted in the salvation of even one soul" he would consider all his troubles well rewarded.

In October, 1674, he set out with two companions, crossed the Sturgeon Bay portage from Green Bay into Lake Michigan, and paddled down the western shore of the lake.

Now the Journal tells of hardships, of stormy weather, snow, delay by wind, shortage of game, of poor shelter, of rough waves, of increasing cold, of floating masses of ice. Lake Michigan is a formidable body of water for canoe

travel; another voyager, St. Cosmé, who followed in Marquette's course a few years later, wrote:

"The wind which suddenly rose on the lake compelled us to land half a league from Chickagon." (Chicago.) "We had considerable difficulty in landing and saving our canoe; we all had to jump into the water. One must be very careful along the lakes, and especially Lake Mixcigan whose shores are very low, to take to the land as soon as possible when waves rise on the lake, for the rollers become so high that one runs the risk of breaking his canoe and losing all its contents. Many travelers have been wrecked there."

It was December when Marquette and his companions arrived at the "river of the portage," and they found it "frozen to the depth of half a foot."

They began to haul their baggage toward the portage. But the cold had deepened, and Marquette was ill. The wind swept off the lake and hunted through the low dunes and the long grasses of the desolate, uninhabited spot. It was savage weather. Marquette was obliged to write:

"Having encamped near the portage, two leagues up the river, we resolved to winter there, as it was impossible to go further since we were too much hindered and my ailment did not permit me to give myself much fatigue. . . . After the 14th, my disease turned into a bloody flux."

They lived in a "hut" on the south branch of the Chicago River. The spot has been located as at the foot of the Damen Avenue bridge, well in the busy center of the city of today. As to the "hut" or cabin, reports vary. Some say they built it themselves. Some say it had been built by trappers and that Marquette's party found it standing empty. We can only guess what kind of a structure it might have been, for the word "hut" or "cabin" was often applied to Indian dwellings that were no more than four stakes driven into the ground with a woven mat pulled about them, and Marquette's shelter may have been as flimsy as this. We might hail this as Chicago's first house, but it seems to have passed away with Marquette's



A solitary figure stalking the dunes

going. Others who traveled by a few years later do not mention it.

There were then sand hillocks in that vicinity that gave some shelter, and there were bushes and a few scrub trees. Between there and the portage, prairie grass grew higher than a man's head. But of the country round about, Marquette wrote little. Perhaps in that long, hard winter of his increasing illness there was little that he could comment on that would have been in his usual, happy vein.

Yet you can picture him, when he was well enough to walk out, a solitary figure stalking the dunes along the icebound shore under the low gray sky of winter, his black robe whipping in the wind, the desolate gulls screaming overhead, his thought turned inward, the Latin words chanted aloud: "Credo quod redemptor meus vivit. . . ."

Though the entries have grown briefer, his Journal tells of the winter hunger on the land, of animals who traveled close to famine when the deep snows came and the river stayed

hard, of a party of fur traders who came by and stopped to visit with him, a nameless surgeon among them. He tells of a band of Indians who camped beside him for a month and who, in their affection, would have gladly carried him with all his equipment down to the greater comfort of their villages to the south; of food obtained, "a sack of corn and other delicacies," and of war-like Indians who came to barter generously for powder.

"I replied: first, that I had come to instruct them, by speaking to them of prayer, etc.; second, that I would give them no powder, because we sought to preserve peace everywhere and I did not wish them to begin war with the Miamis; third, that I feared not hunger; fourth, that I would encourage the French to bring them goods."

Toward the end of March a thaw set in, and though "the waters rose so high that we had barely time to decamp as fast as possible, putting our goods in the trees and trying to sleep on a hillock," it seemed as though their troubles of the winter were at an end and he could write:

"The Blessed Virgin Immaculate has taken such care of us during the winter that we have not lacked provisions and have still remaining a large sack of corn with some meat and fat. We also lived very pleasantly, for my illness did not prevent me from saying holy mass every day."

The last entry, made while still at the hut, reads:

"If the French procure robes in this country, they do not disrobe the savages, so great are the hardships that must be endured to procure them."

Another Jesuit of the period, Father Dablon, picks up the narrative and relates how Marquette made the journey over the portage and founded his mission among the Illinois Indians; how, growing more ill, he set about his return voyage to Michilimackinac; and how, when he had gone as far as where the present city of Ludington stands upon the eastern shore of Lake Michigan, this good man died

and was buried by his two companions. Marquette had wished for that martyr ending—death in the wilderness.

And Joliet, back at headquarters in Quebec, was still urging, "It would only be necessary to make a canal by cutting through but half a league of prairie to pass from the foot of the Lake of the Illinois to the River St. Louis" (Illinois River) "which falls into the Mississippi. The bark, when there, would sail to the Gulf of Mexico."

The canal had been conceived.

Chapter Two

SABLE BUILDS A HOUSE



Point Du Sable was a good trader

THE portage was well known to the Indians. It was the most used route between the Mississippi and the Great Lakes. And other trails that the Indians had made were to become the wagon routes, the railway lines of the white men. The Great Sauk Trail, beginning near Rock Island, led east to Chicago and following the curve of the lake, swept northward into Canada. Far back before the white man's coming, Chicago was a travel center.

But, being a much traveled route, it was exposed to danger

when there was war among the tribes, and for that reason no settlement existed on the forked river, though on the northern, more-wooded branch, there were occasional encampments.

Of the six years that went by after Marquette's departure no word has come down to us of a white man's passing save that of Father Allouez, who in April, 1677, arrived to take charge of the Illinois mission to the south. Traders there may well have been, but if so they fitted in with the silence of the lonely shore where the blackheaded gulls and the kittiwakes wheeled, riding the wind, screaming and laughing above the restless beating of the choppy breakers. The crescent-shaped sandy plain knew only the muffled thud of hoofs, bison, and elk and deer, the hurried scratchings and trottings of little paws, the soft, steady pad of moccasined feet. Water birds clustered along the winding, sluggish river that lacked the power to thrust away the sandbar at its mouth. They settled in the swamp gullies that drained into it or rose with a whir to wing westward over the level plain that stretched to the setting sun. Between one rain and the next, the tracks remained of hoof and paw and foot and claw. Birds left their myriad three-toed printing on wet sands. Wind blurred the markings on those slowly eastward-shifting dunes where neither grass roots nor roots of alder bushes nor of oak nor maple nor scrub pine had gripped deep enough to stay the drift. In the dry late summer fires came running through the grass from the prairies to the west where the Indians had started them to drive out game. Marquette's footprints were effaced; no trace of him remained.

October, 1679. . . .

Robert René Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle, that proud, unfortunate, illustrious man went by the river mouth, disdain-
ing it, choosing instead to make his way down into Illinois
by the St. Joseph River and the Kankakee. The honest
Joliet had believed the merit of his exploit would reward

him with the leadership of this second expedition, but La Salle had won it.

Tonty was with La Salle, and it was in this adventure, the first of many that would bring these two back and forth across this section of the country, that they built the fort they named Crevecoeur. Whether it was so named—Heart-break—after a remembered fortification in the Netherlands, or because the name was suitable to the state of their affairs, certainly Tonty's memoir tells a tale of hardship, conflict and betrayals.

There must have been some fault of leadership when, from the outset, there was so much amiss among this small company. Of loyalty, only that of Tonty for La Salle stands out. Men deserted from the party before the expedition was well under way. Men attempted to desert before the Illinois was reached, and at Crevecoeur:

"Part of our people deserted and they even put poison in our kettle. M. de La Salle was poisoned, but he was saved by some antidote a friend had given him in France."

And again:

"While I was absent all our men deserted. They took away everything that was finest and most valuable, and left me with two Recollects (friars) and three Frenchmen, newly arrived from France, stripped of everything and at the mercy of the savages."

It was on this occasion that the deserters destroyed Fort Crevecoeur, stole the ammunition and the goods and left a written message, "We are all savages."

But of the bravery and hardihood and perseverance of both Tonty and La Salle, belabored with one recurring misfortune after another, there can be no question. Boats were wrecked. Canoes upset with the loss of all their contents. Provisions failed, and tribes were hostile. On one occasion, Tonty traveled through the wilderness, feverish, with swollen legs, subsisting "on nothing but wild garlic which we were obliged

to grub from under the snow." La Salle set out to discover news of a missing provision boat—he was the first to attempt to bring a sailboat into these waters—and in the dead of winter he marched overland from Illinois to Niagara. Tonty, who sought to play one tribe against another, could stand alone among hostile Indians, a knife wound in his breast, and show no fear while "there was a man behind me with a knife in his hand who, every now and again, lifted my hair."

There is a sharp contrast between the gentle Marquette's refusal to give powder to the Indians and Tonty's tactics:

"As for the country of the Isolinois . . . it may be said to contain the finest lands ever seen . . . the savages there are quick, agile and brave, but extremely lazy, except in war, when they think nothing of seeking their enemies at a distance of 500 or 600 leagues from their own country. This they constantly show in the country of the Iroquois, whom, at my instigation, they continually harass. Not a year passes when they do not take a number of prisoners and scalps."

From this expedition La Salle and Tonty returned only to set out soon again. They would, in time, build several forts along the great waterway, down into Louisiana, claiming all the Mississippi basin for the French king and attempting to fortify it. Theirs was a militant spirit.

The next time they came, bound for the Gulf, they did not pass by the river mouth. In January, 1682:

"We went in canoes to the River Chicaou, where there is a portage which joins that of the Isolinois. The rivers being frozen, we made sledges and dragged our baggage to a point thirty leagues below the village of Isolinois, and there finding the navigation open, we arrived at the end of January at the River Mississippi. The distance from Chicaou is estimated at 140 leagues."

After their first use of the Chicago portage, mention of it comes again and again in Tonty's memoir. Sometimes, delayed by winds, they camped near the mouth of the river. Once

Tonty mentions "the fort of Chicaou where M. de la Durantoy commanded." But if there was a fort by the river mouth, it does not appear to have been any more enduring than Marquette's "hut."

It is pleasing to the fancy to picture La Salle, this grand gentleman who had access to the court of France, and influence about him in Quebec, and whose portrait shows a haughty face, long, well-tended curls, elegant apparel, passing through the reedy wilderness of the Chicago River. Recently, I was conversing with a man whose office is in one of those great buildings that now edge the river, rising straight and sheer and massive and having their own colossal and astounding man-made beauty. "Look," he swung his arm, eyes bright—"right out there—on that river—La Salle, in his velvet cloak in a canoe . . . can you picture it?"

I suppose I always *did* picture it that way, but this sudden demand on my imagination started up a new train of thought. What a sorry-looking thing a velvet cloak would be, subjected to canoe travel! Of all the delicate fabrics requiring the most fastidious care against wrinkling or mussing or a spot of water, velvet would certainly be the last choice of the well-dressed man or woman for a wilderness jaunt! Not to mention that it would completely fail in the prime requirement of a cloak, warmth. From the subject of the velvet cloak, the imagination—doing its best to answer the demand—moved swiftly on, taking up the matter of the buckles ("the first root or bramble would tear them off!"), the plumes ("after a good rain?") and the curls ("well—! and not a hairdresser within a thousand miles!"). At this point I thought it was best to nod in silence. I could picture it.

Chicagoans have clung to the romantic image and given La Salle's name to one of their principal streets. But La Salle was no friend to the canal idea, proposed by Joliet. He declares himself against it with an energy which, considering how often he himself made use of the portage, would seem to show an extraordinary lack of vision, were it not that his words reveal

a bitterness against Joliet. That hints of rivalry, of jealousy, of the lengths that even a man called "great" will go to be top-dog.

"There is still another difficulty which the proposed ditch would not remedy, which is that the lake of the Illinois always forms a sand bar at the mouth of the channel which leads to it, and I greatly doubt, notwithstanding what is said, that it could be cleared or swept away by the force of the current of the Chicago . . . Moreover, I doubt even if it should be a complete success whether a vessel could resist the great freshets caused by the currents in the Chicago in the spring which are much heavier than those of the Rhone. Moreover, it would only be serviceable . . . at most for fifteen or twenty days of each year. Moreover . . . should such communication between Louisiana and New France be desired, it is too difficult by way of the lakes because of the diversity of the winds to which their situation exposes them, the furious gales that must always be encountered . . . the autumn and spring storms are so furious, so sudden and so long, particularly furious from the Northwest and Northeast, and from the Southeast in the Spring . . . This is what I have to say concerning this passage by which Joliet pretended an easy communication could be had with Louisiana."

The final tragedy of betrayal overtook La Salle when he was murdered by his own party in the land far to the southwest of the lower Mississippi. The stragglers returning from that expedition, led by Joutel, arrived at the mouth of the Chicago River, where they stayed for eight days, held there by contrary winds, and, finally despairing of the attempt to embark, they returned to winter in Illinois at the Fort of St. Louis at the Rock. In April, they came again to Chicago and were again delayed, but after ten days departed homeward.

With the passing of La Salle the French epoch begins to come to an end. Though loyal Tonty strove to carry on his lost leader's plans, and was seen once again at the portage,

bound for the lower Mississippi as late as 1698, war between the English and the French had broken out in 1689. That war was to sweep away all that vast empire of New France which + etched in such a wide swath from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico, and for which so many in black robes and in buckskins and in velvet had toiled with such bravery and such devotion.

For a while the French held on in the wilderness outposts, but, like Joutel's party, they were only stragglers. In 1696, Father François Pinet built the mission of the Guardian Angel on the banks of the Chicago River. Ordered by Frontenac to leave in 1697, he returned in 1698, and evidently he succeeded in gathering an Indian settlement about him, for the Jesuit, St. Cosmé, passing by in 1698 says of the mission:

"Their house is built on the bank of a small river, with the lake on one side and a fine, vast prairie on the other. The village of the savages contains over a hundred and fifty cabins, and a league up the river is still another village, almost as large."

But the mission passed away, and it was eighty years before a settler came to the land beside the river. Though he was a Frenchman by the name of Guary who opened a trading post on the north branch and planted rows of corn beside his house, the land was no longer French but English. Three years before his arrival, the Treaty of Paris of 1775 had been signed, putting an end to French dominion. But 1775, you remember, was the year that the first shot was fired at Lexington in the struggle to achieve American independence. The next settler who arrived—a unique individual by the name of Baptiste Point Du Sable—built his house by the Chicago River on American soil, for that was in the year 1784, three years after the defeat of Cornwallis.

The house that Sable built was to figure in the early history of Chicago.

Jean Baptiste Point Du Sable was an educated man, hand-

some and of aristocratic manner, polished and courtly and intelligent. He was a Negro from San Domingo. As his reputation spread, it was said that his father ranked high among the notable French families of that day. Possibly his mother had been a slave, but he referred to himself as a "free Negro."

He was a good trader and he prospered. Like many a Frenchman of that time, he took an Indian for a wife, spoke the Indian language and was on good terms with the tribes. Kickapoos, Miamis, Illini, and Pottawatomis and those of the Fire Nation, had been in that vicinity. After 1760 the Pottawatomis had increased about Chicago. It was from them that Sable chose a wife. Their wigwams were clustered close by his home.

Sable's house was a comfortable building with a fireplace of gray field-stone in the principal room, and a roofed-over porch running the full length of its front. It was built on a sloping rise of ground on the north side of the river, close to its mouth. In those days the river curved sharply to the south and ran parallel to the lake for a few hundred yards before entering it. The spit of land thus formed afforded a shelter from the direct onslaught of the waves, so that the sluggish little river, thirty yards wide and eighteen feet deep, had a quiet harbor. From the door of his house, Sable could look down upon a canoe beached at the foot of his yard, only a good stone's throw away. He could see the stir of Indians departing for their winter hunting. He could watch out for their return. Squaws paddled by or dug for clams along the shore.

Sable traded in furs, in flour, bread and pork. He added to his stock and constructed a surprisingly industrious assortment of outbuildings as the years passed. When, after seventeen years' residence, he sold his holdings, they included a bakehouse, a smokehouse, a dairy, a workshop, a poultry house, a horse mill, barns, axes, saws, scythes, carts, a plow, hens, hogs, mules and thirty head of cattle.

During his residence, what is now Illinois became a part

of the Northwest Territory; settlers were coming along the Ohio waterway into southern Illinois; land was surveyed and offered for sale; justices of the peace were appointed; Kaskaskia became a capital. But by the lake shore there was none of this activity, not even when, in 1795, at Greenville, the Indians ceded to the government a strip of land six miles square at the mouth of the Chicago River. Chicago was too far away, too much in the wilderness, there were too many Indians about.

A Canadian trader, Ouilmette, settled by the river in 1790. Sometime later two Canadian traders joined the little colony. In 1796, Sable's wife, Susanne, bore him a daughter whom they named Eulalie. That is the first birth on record in Chicago.

In that quiet, industrious house a child growing up would have heard stories of her mother's people, of the friendly people all about her to whom that house was a hospitable center. She would have heard those Pottawatomí legends with their own imaginative beauty, about Kitchemonedo, the good spirit, and Matchemonedo, the evil spirit, and about the story of the flood. That story is set down in the book on Illinois written by the Federal Writers' Project:

"Kitchemonedo made the world and all things in it. He peopled it with beings who looked like men, but were perverse, ungrateful and wicked, and never raised their eyes from the ground to thank him for anything. At last the Great Spirit plunged the world into a huge lake and drowned them. He then withdrew the world from the water and made a single man, very handsome, but also very sad and lonesome. Then, to allay his loneliness, Kitchemonedo took pity on the man and sent him a sister. One night the young man had a dream. When he awoke, he said to his sister, "Five young men will come to your lodge door tonight to visit you. You must not talk to the first four. But with the fifth you may speak and laugh." She acted accordingly; the first to call was Usana (tobacco); being repulsed, he fell down and died. The second was Waupako (pumpkin); the third, Esh-

kossinin (melon); the fourth Kokees (bean); all met the same fate. But when Tamin (maize) presented himself, she received him kindly. They were immediately married, and from this union the Indians sprang. Tamin buried the four unsuccessful suitors, and from their graves grew tobacco, melons, pumpkins, beans."

While little Eulalie drowsed off to sleep, dreaming over the tale, there might come the plaintive music of an Indian flute played by some young brave alone on the hummock of a meadow ditch, telling of the hunger of his heart under the whiteness of the moon.

But for all the quiet peace that rested over Sable's house, there was trouble in the wilderness country, trouble between white man and Indian, rumors traveling of a killing here, a killing there. The voyageurs, with their red sashes round their fringed buckskin blouses, their jaunty-tasseled stocking caps of red, would bring word of it when they came in with pelts to trade. And afterward the old Indians, smoking cross-legged on the floor before the hearth in Sable's house would ponder, troubled, asking questions of their friend, not understanding what it was that made the white man cut the land into little pieces and put up fences and say, "This is mine. Keep out." Did not the Great Spirit give the land to everybody? What would happen to the hunting? The game would go away. Famine would come. Only the white man with the square of land inside the fence would have anything to eat. And how did they get the land? How! It was well known—the big cask of firewater stood by the treaty table. "Put a mark here," the white man said, holding out papers. What were these papers? What did they mean? Did anyone know what the marks meant when firewater had been drunk?

William Burnett, a fur trader of those days, writes in his "Wilderness Letters" ominously:

"January 20, 1787—I have been informed with a bad piece of news by a Frenchman just arrived from the Kankaski. He

says when he left that an Indian arrived there which told him that there had been an Englishman had been killed at La-fourche on the Illinois River on his way from Illinois to Detroit, but cannot learn who it is . . . April, 1788—Dacharme that has been here lately says that some of the traders from Macinac going down the Illinois River last fall were pillaged by a band of Pottawatomi . . . February 6, 1791—This cursed war that subsists between the Americans and the Indians does us more hurt than what is generally imagined . . . The Pottawatomis at Chicago have killed a Frenchman about twenty days ago. They say there is plenty of Frenchmen. If you tell them that their Father will be angry with them, they will tell you for an answer, what will he gain by that. It is surprising with what disdain they do talk of the English, language too insulting. This the thanks for the millions squandered away upon these rascals, and if things was to take a change, they will be the first to fall upon you.”

Rascals . . . Called by that name, the Indians would live up to it.

Chapter Three

MASSACRE AT DEARBORN



A good plan, and a good site

IT WAS slow work, terribly slow work . . . Captain Whistler came indoors from overseeing the construction. There on the table lay the plans—his plans of the fort. Nicely drawn up, well devised. He took a creative pleasure in pausing again to scrutinize the chart. Two blockhouses, northwest and southeast corners, barracks two stories high, commandants' quarters on east side, subordinates' on west, main gate on south side flanked by barracks for common soldiers, double row of palisades enclosing all, covered passage to river to insure water

in case of siege . . . A good plan and a good site—the ground high on the south side of the river and on a jut of land made by that turn of the river before entering the lake. Might say the fort had water on three sides—west, north and east . . . Yes, a good plan. This furthest outpost of government authority would stand strong for law and order and for justice. The flag was up, God bless it. The Stars and Stripes were flying at Chicago, and Fort Dearborn was being built in the year of 1803.

Chicago . . . Queer thing about the place, it had a name, same as a city, before there was a white man in it—or a black either, for that matter. Way back as far as anyone ever heard, they'd speak about the land around the river as Chicago. "We landed at Chicago" . . . "We camped at Chicago" . . . You'd think they'd known that there was going to be a fort and a town and everything run straight and civilized. Not that they always said the name the same. Sometimes it was Eschikagon, or Chi-cau-gon. Whistler mused on the meaning of the word. He had heard men talking about it; Shecaugo meant playful waters . . . Pretty rough play, Whistler thought, remembering the long hard pull bringing his family by rowboat from St. Joseph . . . Che-ca-go, meaning destitute . . . He rejected that. It conflicted with his vision of what was to be. He didn't like the other interpretation either, the one based on the strong smell of the wild garlic along the river banks . . . Gitchi-ka-go, "a thing great or strong" . . . That was best. But did it matter what the word meant? Chicago would make its own name. And to an ear pleased by poetry, the Indian word had a fair sound.

Men passed by the door, grunting as they hauled heavy timber, and Captain Whistler sank down on the stool beside the table, frowning. Slow work, hard work, no oxen to do the hauling and the men having to fell timber across on the north shore where it grew. Well, a stockade and a shelter for the troops was up, but at this rate it was going to take five years or six. And now fever among the troops! That on top

of lack of proper tools, equipment—clothing even! Would fresh supplies ever arrive? And he was responsible for everything that went on here, the construction and the welfare . . . Captain Whistler in charge . . . at forty dollars a month—when it came through . . . debts to pay . . . with fifteen children . . . Well, money wasn't what counted, no sir! Duty first and the job done right. Law and order, civilized way of doing things—

His thought broke, cut short by the long, maudlin shriek of a drunken Indian. Whistler was on his feet and at the door, glaring black-faced across the river toward the Sable house, where Trader Kinzie had come to live.

Kinzie sat busy at the long work table against the window, his implements for making the silver trinkets the Indians so coveted spread round about him. His apprenticeship with a silversmith in his youth had come in handy in his years of trading. It made him stand in well with the Indians, and any trader who didn't know who his best friends were had better quit at the outset.

Kinzie hadn't had to quit. He knew just how to play the game. Trading was a paying business with him. When he had heard about the fort that was to be built he figured right away on coming to Chicago, and he had the money to move right in across from the fort and buy up the best-built, best-stocked house among the four that were already there, Ouilmette's and Pettie's and Lee's and Le Mai's—and Le Mai's was the one that queer dark fellow by the name of Sable built. His fingers worked skillfully on the metal armband. He wondered if it was true what they said, about Sable wanting to be made chief of the Pottawatomis and going off in a huff when he didn't get it.

The Indian who had been asleep on the floor behind him woke up with a grunt, staggered to his feet and shook himself. Kinzie, keeping on with his work, asked, "Tshah-koh-zhah, Wau-kaum-zee-kah—What is it, Yellow Thunder?"

Yellow Thunder was looking at the whisky cask beside the door. Kinzie shook his head. "You look bad."

The man dropped into a squat beside him, cajoling, "Shawnee-aw-kee, wau-rshob-ee-rah thsoomsh-koo-nee-noh—Silverman, I have no looking glass."

Smiling, Kinzie handed him the finished armband. Yellow Thunder put it on and rose, tall and straight, made happy. "Hoh-hoh-hoh! Neetchee!"

Still smiling, still unsteady, Wah-kaum-zee-kah rolled out the door, brandishing the ornament, shouting.

Kinzie, looking after him through the window, caught the movement of a figure in a doorway across the river. Whistler . . . Well, would any Indian call *him* "neetchee"—friend? Not if he meant what he said about no liquor to the Indians.

Kinzie sprang up with a flash of quick hot anger. He turned to sorting the pelts that Yellow Thunder had left dumped by the door. Whistler had better learn what part of the world he was in. Why, you couldn't trade with an Indian these days if you didn't give him what he wanted. That was just the way it was, good or bad, and you had to take things in this world the way you found them. Likely Whistler was green enough to think the poor Indians were being cheated. Kinzie's lips twisted in a bitter smile while he spread out the skins and worked them in his hands, the story coming back to him of the trader who had answered that accusation by declaring that he'd been trying to cheat the Indians all his life and never managed to! They were too cute at bargaining . . .

A young Indian woman stood in the door. "Pe-quazhe-gun cho-kay-go—I have no bread."

Kinzie's sudden anger was gone. He held out his hands, saying, "Pecn-tee-geen, n'dau-nis—come in, my daughter."

"Neetchee" . . . yes, friend. The Indians knew whom to come to.

He was going, he was through, put out by the machinations of that rascally fellow Kinzie.

That was how Captain Whistler saw it, and he was a man who, having held his post with a strong and stubborn sense of honor, was embittered by recall. In his seven years of command at Fort Dearborn he had often clashed with Kinzie over the selling of whisky to the Indians. As a government officer it was his duty to put a stop to just that, and he took his duty literally, no whit swayed by the fact that Kinzie was no different from other traders of the day and only following a custom quite general among them. But somehow, in the conflict, Kinzie had outmaneuvered him, making protestations against him which had found an ear in Washington. Those in power had thought best to end the conflict by removing Captain Whistler to another post.

Bitterly, the man at the fort thought back over his seven years of tenure. Fragments of images, of events, passed before his eyes . . . White caps on the lake and wildfowl screaming in a winter storm . . . Objects seen at a great distance when the plains were blanketed with snow—small black roving dots, the prairie wolves . . . The loud melancholy, endless raving of a funeral powwow in the Indian graveyard lying between the fort and the lake . . . Summer heat and the prairie swamps filled with mosquitoes—walk through the dunes swinging your arms against a cloud of nagging, stinging torment. What good was the land? Down in the prairies the sod was too tough to break. Four oxen yoked to an iron-tipped wooden plow would strain to break grass roots thicker than a man's wrist, gripping deep into the earth.

1803, he had arrived . . . How friendly and courteous the Indians had seemed then, gathering about in curiosity to watch the building of the fort, murmuring that "bon jour" they had picked up from the days when any white man who came along spoke French. And in 1804 came Kinzie, wife and infant son. And at once Kinzie held authority. Justice of the peace, no less! Why, you might say that the man didn't



Celebration at Kinzie's

even know how to spell his own name! "Kinzie" . . . It should have been MacKenzie, of course. And to think the fellow had actually officiated at the marriage of a Whistler!—Sarah Whistler to James Abbott—1804. Yes, and his daughter—Kinzie's—Ellen Marion Kinzie, was the first white child to be born in Chicago, December, 1805 . . .

A swell of breeze bore sound across the river to the man brooding in the fort. Music—Kinzie's fiddle. To be sure—there *would* be celebration in that house tonight, the quick-tempered rogue in high spirits, and all the motley of the little settlement drawn about him, Ouilmette with his Pottawatomie wife, that daredevil voyageur with his bonnet rouge he would not think to doff to any man, and Indians of course, the air reeking of kin-ni-kin-nick, that vile bark tobacco which they smoked.

Well, maybe Kinzie suited the place at that. Let him have the Indians for his friends if he wanted them, beggars and

thieves they were. When they came whining about the fort you had to watch their feet as well as their hands.

Ah, well . . . Let us hope that we have borne our hardships as became us . . . Captain Whistler, whose grandson would one day make that name world famous as an artist, rose heavily to join his wife. He hoped that she would lay aside her embroidery and read aloud to him the poetry of Shenstone. That would drown out that rogue's fiddling. Kinzie had been too shrewd for him, too able. Yes, Kinzie belonged. . . .

"Indians!"

That had become a cry of fear. At one lonely outpost or another, and in the settlements that had believed themselves secure, the cry was raised in a sudden warning shout—if there was time. And then there would be another story added to the spreading tales of treachery and cruelty, of scalplings, burnings, ransom, torture.

Two civilizations were in conflict. One must go, they could not both survive. As that idea grew fixed, fear and hatred rose steadily on both sides. Civilization? The white man would not grant that the red man had any. Why wouldn't he settle down on the land allotted to him and learn how to live like a white man? And if the land allotted to him turned out to be needed by the white man, why wouldn't he just move on somewhere else? What difference did it make to him anyhow when he didn't know what to do with the land? He ought to move on, get out of the way, let the men who knew how to work the land have it. Making treaties with these savages, paying for the land, agreeing to boundaries, well, that was all fair and square and legal to be sure, but half the time there was no sense in holding to the treaties. The Indian didn't know what it was all about anyway.

There were some leaders among the Indians who made themselves heard, speaking in sorrowful dignity, appealing with reasoned words for justice to their race. But the white

man's civilization came steadily on like a great avalanche, crushing the red man's as it came. It was a force in motion, having the greater power. The thin sad voices speaking in reproof and in appeal were drowned out in the many-voiced hum of the white man's talk of progress. Progress—a wagon road where there had been only a footpath, a farm where there had been only a forest, a mill where there had been only a falls. Profit from the land, industry and commerce—that was right, that was as it should be. Could the white man see differently? And if he caught an Indian sneaking up with a tomahawk—why, that proved you couldn't trust these vermin. Sure, the only good Indian was a dead one.

Yet there was some intermingling, enmity abolished, here and there. We know about white men who turned away from their own kind and chose the Indian civilization in preference. Children, who had been kidnaped by the Indians and raised by them, would sometimes return to the white settlements when they had grown up. But not always would they remain. Often they drifted back, preferring Indian life. Especially among the French marriages between Indian and white were not uncommon. Less pleasant as a sign of acceptance of Indian ways are the stories of the white men who, in their attacks on Indians, turned savage and did the scalping.

It is easy to write of all this quite calmly now, sheltered by the safety of the intervening years, but I can remember that my grandmother feared Indians. She spoke of them with hatred. When she was a white-haired woman I saw her shrink back, nervous in their presence, even though that was on a visit to an Indian reservation in the west. She had lived as a child in a log cabin in a Michigan forest. I can imagine that child's terror when the door opened and an Indian walked in. "They never knocked or asked for leave." And there was only Mama in the house to cling to, for Papa was far away with other men building a corduroy road. Somehow, her enduring enmity, blind and personal as it

was, seems more honest than the sentimentality which so quickly sprang up when the Indian menace was no more, a sentimentality which was too often content with a kind of funeral oration. For the Indians are not dead. They are a living race among us. We who, as a nation, have been enriched by the culture of the many folk that we are made up of could be further enriched by the Indian culture we have for so long ignored. The Indian is not someone to sigh over. He is someone to hold a hand out to—now. And if we do, with friendliness, with understanding, we may be sure that he will put something into it.

Fear of the Indians was in large part the reason why the little settlement at Chicago was experiencing no boom. 1812 started in about like 1804. There were five houses instead of four, a few new faces. But despite the sturdy little fort and some seventy-five soldiers mustered there, now under command of Captain Nathan Heald, new people pushing westward held to the more populated areas along the Ohio waterway, not caring to take the risk of settling in so remote an outpost as Chicago, with stories of Indian unrest upon every tongue.

Moreover, waterways were the means of transportation, and no waterway connected the Great Lakes with the American settlements in the east. And the emigration of the French along the St. Lawrence had, of course, come to an end. Americans who traveled westward on the Ohio and landed in the southern part of Illinois felt no urge to turn northward to the lake. For one thing, there were no wagon roads, only narrow trails, and as to the portage, that was all very well for men traveling light in a canoe which could be lifted and carried along with the rest of the gear. But it would not do for families who came laden with all their possessions requiring a far heavier boat than could be dragged or carried between one river and the next. Besides—there were the Indians. It was better not to go too far, to huddle close together.

True, Tecumseh and his band of warriors, gathered from many tribes, had been well vanquished by the armed forces which went against them at Tippecanoe. But that was very recent—in the fall of 1811. The war spirit that had been roused for that battle was still alive in the Indians. No, the menace was not ended.

How should the tragedy so soon to fall upon Fort Dearborn be told? . . .

Reading this account and that, the strong figure of Kinzie stands now in one light and now in another. He quarreled with Heald as he had quarreled with Whistler. He quarreled with Irwin, a man serving as government agent for the Indians. With La Lime, who has been called "the mystery man" because so little is known for certain of him, Kinzie also quarreled, and the quarrel came to the fury of knives. Kinzie killed La Lime. Murder, some said, and self-defense, said others. It was a serious enough affair for Kinzie to take to the woods until he saw which way the wind blew, but when he returned after only a brief absence, no action was raised against him. Some paint him as a shrewd prosperous trader, kindly enough, having a real friendship for and an understanding with the Indians, a man with sufficient repute to stand well with his own kind and be put up for office as justice of the peace. And he is also described as one who consistently broke the government ruling in giving the Indians what they could not take—whisky. Far worse—as one who, when the showdown came between two races, did not raise a gun in behalf of his own people. And yet—one might also ask, why should he have done so? He saw trouble coming, warned against it. When his warning was not heeded, need he sacrifice his family and himself to another man's stubborn folly?

Wondering what sort of man this Kinzie was, I turned from the books. "Aunt," I asked, "what kind of man was Kinzie?"

"Why, a very fine man indeed. My mother knew his daughter well. They were nice people, well thought of."

Well, that is the nearest I can come to first-hand information, and it carries weight.

Anyhow, it is Kinzie's daughter-in-law, Mrs. John H. Kinzie, who in her book, *Wau-Bun*, published in 1855, gives us the most detailed account of what took place in Chicago in the year of 1812.

Captain Heald was not perturbed. In his belief, the Indians coming and going about the Chicago settlement were friendly as they had always been, whatever unrest and enmity existed elsewhere. No doubt when he strolled out from the fort and met a group of them huddled together on the sands, he would linger a moment to give a pleasant word of greeting. There may have been times when he would have liked to go beyond that and have a chat with the fellows, but he did not know their lingo, and he probably would have thought it beneath his dignity as commander of the fort to have learned it.

Perhaps on that April evening when the first warning came, he had strolled over to the nearby "factory" building to pass the time with William Irwin, the government agent, and he may have met some Indians along the way and not thought to notice if there were faces which he had not seen about the place before in the group. To one not knowing Indians as individuals, they would look very much alike. Most of them had shaved heads, all but the braided topknot, a small, close-fitting affair not much bigger than a freshman's cap, into which two or three feathers would be thrust. Earrings, an armband, perhaps a jingling necklace, would serve as ornament. Naked from the waist up, buckskin trousers and moccasins were the most usual apparel.

Heald, strolling along on that pleasant spring evening, would most likely have given a passing thought to the group

of soldiers who had gone up river earlier in the day to fish. Muskellunge for breakfast would do nicely.

Trader Kinzie was not so sure. . . . On this Indian or that he knew he could rely, counting true, dependable friends among the many he knew. But he kept it in mind that once a year the Pottawatomie chiefs came in to say good-by to him, bound for Fort Malden in Canada where they would receive the large presents the British gave to them. Now, when you stopped to consider that the British were not exactly friendly to the Americans and that no one gives large presents for nothing, and when you followed that up with the question—what would happen if there were trouble between the British and the Americans, what side would the Indians be on—?

Besides that, Kinzie knew that some of the Pottawatomis and the Winnebagos moving freely about Chicago had fought alongside of Ottawas and Shawnees at Tippecanoe under Tecumseh, and Tecumseh was a great leader among the Indians, striving to unite all tribes against the encroaching Americans. In the previous autumn, Kinzie himself had started out on a trip to Detroit, but word coming to him of the fight at Tippecanoe, he had hastily turned back that he might send orders to all the traders he dealt with telling them to sell no ammunition to the Indians. That order had not been canceled.

Glancing across the river, he would have seen Captain Heald on his way to the "factory" building. And, seeing Indians, he would have observed a new face here and there. New faces had been turning up quite frequently of late.

Ellen Marion—Nellie, for short—was setting the supper table with the competent seriousness of a child entrusted with adult work. At eight years old a child was counted as a "hand" in a frontier home where nearly every article was of home manufacture and a woman with a family had to be on the go from sunup to sunset, even though she was the wife of as prosperous a trader as Mr. Kinzie, who now

had many in his employ. Nellie would help her mother in a dozen tasks, pouring tallow into candle molds, making soap, churning butter.

Kinzie turned from the door. "Where's your ma?"

"Gone up to M's Burns. She'd ought to be home 'bout now."

Kinzie recollected Mrs. Burns had had her baby. He guessed his wife had fetched her up some venison broth. A look at the table showed him their own meal was ready and waited her coming. He took up his fiddle and began to play.

At the first scrape of the bow the children were dancing about the room. Nellie, her duties done, dropped off responsibility, capering and squealing with delight. And then—

Steps struck quick and hard across the porch coming with a rush, and Mrs. Kinzie was upon them, breathless, white-faced, terror in her eyes.

"Indians!—Lee's place—scalping and killing!"

So it had come . . . Kinzie had them all out the door and headed for the river on the run. Pulled up on the bank, under the row of poplars were two pirogues—boats fashioned out of hollow logs. In a flash the family had piled into them and were rowing for the fort. Mrs. Kinzie, still breathless from her quarter-mile run from the Burns' place, gasped out what had happened. She had seen the man and the boy who worked for Mr. White up at Lee's place on the west side of the South Branch, running along the river bank toward the fort. They had shouted the news across to her as they ran.

When the Kinzies got to the fort, the man and the boy were already there, telling their story to Captain Heald. On Lee's place, afterward called Hardscrabble, lived Mr. White and the three that were employed to help him with his cattle and his farming. One of these was a Frenchman, one a discharged soldier, one a boy, Lee's son. During the afternoon, a party of Indians, dressed and painted, had entered the house and seated themselves with their usual lack of ceremony. Their appearance and their manner boded ill, and when the French-

man, uneasy, muttered that these Indians "were none of our folks" and not of the Pottawatomi tribe, the discharged soldier advised the boy that they had better duck and run for it if they could. The two of them had started to slip away to the canoes. The Indians wanted to know where they were going. By signs they indicated the cattle on the opposite bank, and that they must be fed. Once across the river, the man and boy made a pretense of collecting the cattle, gradually working their way out of sight, when they took to their heels for the fort. They had covered only a few hundred yards when they heard the firing of two shots back at Lee's place, and they knew by that the worst had happened.

With the telling of their story, thought turned at once to the safety of those outside the fort. Young Ensign Ronan volunteered to go to the Burns' house and escort that family to the fort. With half a dozen soldiers they set out in a scow and soon brought in the Burns family, all safe. Captain Heald was concerned over the party of soldiers who had gone fishing, a corporal and six others. They would be up the South Branch, somewhere near Lee's place. As an alarm, he ordered the firing of a cannon, hoping that would serve as a warning.

Night had come on, dark, without a moon. The fort was in a bustle in which amazement mingled with preparations. Mrs. Heald could not believe it. Why, *their* Indians had always been so friendly! But the wife of Lieutenant Helm, who was also Kinzie's stepdaughter, was not quite so surprised. She was glad all of her own folks were with her in the fort.

There was a stir when the fishing party arrived, and their story confirmed the worst forebodings. They had been coming home when the boom of the cannon resounded through the low sandy hummocks. Trouble—that must mean Indians. They put out their flaring torches and came on down the river as silently as possible. Coming abreast of Lee's place, they saw no light shining from the windows. They put in to investigate. Some held the boat at the bank, ready for flight,

while others stole up across the dark field. Jumping a small enclosure, the corporal's hand fell on a dead body. There was a dog beside it, on guard. Groping, the corporal felt for the head. It had been scalped. That was enough. The men skipped for the boat and came on quickly to the fort.

The night passed without event. In the morning, a party of volunteers set out, soldiers and settlers together, to go to Lee's place. They found that Mr. White had been shot twice and stabbed eleven times. The Frenchman's dog still stood beside his dead master. The bodies were brought back and buried near by.

There was now felt to be no safety outside the fort. Captain Heald gave orders that neither soldier nor citizen should leave the garrison without a guard. Some, who had not yet sought refuge, now did so. A few discharged soldiers, a few half-breed families settled in Irwin's quarters, the Agency house. Sentinels took up duty there at night.

From traders traveling in from Indian country, it was learned that the Indians who had visited Lee's place were Winnebagos who had planned to take every scalp outside the fort, but who had been frightened away by the firing of the cannon.

After that, there were a few minor incidents. One night the patrol encountered Indians lurking unpleasantly close to the fort. They fired upon them—and narrowly missed receiving a tomahawk flung in return. Another night the enemy stole into the esplanade to steal horses, and not finding the horses where they could get at them, stabbed all the sheep instead. Aroused by the bleating, search parties were sent out, but the Indians were not captured.

The days grew longer, warmer. The prairie bloomed with wild flowers. The squares of tilled earth about the fort yielded their produce. Heat came in sweltering waves that made the sands burning to the touch. Outline of bush and hummock quivered under the glare. Now and again a sudden breeze off the vast clear blue of the lake would bring a drop in tem-

perature, a general relief. What a Godsend to be beside the changing, many-colored inland sea!

August 7 . . .

Dispatches for Captain Heald from General Hull.

The bearer, a Pottawatomí chief, delivered them. Might he, please, have a private word with Mr. Kinzie?

The Indian found Kinzie alone in a room, awaiting him.

"I've taken up residence in the fort," Kinzie told him with a grin, greetings given.

Winnemeg nodded approval. The Shaw-nee-aw-kee were wise. So many Indians coming and going now. Not all of them knew the Shaw-nee-aw-kee. Gravely, the Indian confided in his friend. The dispatch he had borne was full of danger. It brought word of war begun June 18 between the British and the Americans. The island of Mackinac had fallen to the English. General Hull was now at Detroit. The dispatch carried orders to Captain Heald "to evacuate the fort, if practical, and in that event, to distribute all the United States property contained in the fort, and in the United States factory or agency, among the Indians in the neighborhood."

"Captain Heald must not go," Winnemeg warned. "He would pass through country where there are many Pottawatomis, not friendly. The young men want scalps. They will not listen to those of us who tell them you are our friends. You have guns, food, in this place?"

"Enough to last six months."

"Stay here. You will be safe inside the fort."

Kinzie shrugged. "I don't give the orders here, Winnemeg. Captain Heald will decide."

"Tell him. Tell him what I say. He must not go. If he will go—then he must go fast, at once, before the Pottawatomis hear of this war, before they can assemble to attack."

Kinzie reflected. Old Catfish was right, of course. He had just come across the country. He knew what the feeling was along the way. He nodded and stood up. "Thank you, neetchee. I'll tell the captain what you say."

Winnemeg insisted earnestly, "He must not go. Stay here."
"Come along," Kinzie told him, "we'll see the captain now."

But Captain Heald was not open to suggestion from Kinzie or an Indian. He had his orders. He was a soldier. He would follow them. He would evacuate the post and before doing so, he would summon all the Indians so that an equitable division of property might be made among them.

"That means you'll wait here until you've raised every Indian in the country round about and brought them together in a force that can outnumber and destroy you the moment you march out of the protection of these walls. And by that time the Indians will have wind of what's up with the British. They'll believe if they fight on the British side they'll get their country back for themselves."

"I shall obey orders," Heald replied with dignity. It annoyed him that Kinzie should have been told the contents of the dispatch before he, the commanding officer, had made it known.

"But your orders are 'If practical.' I'm telling you it's not. You've heard what this man has to say. He's just come through the country. *He* knows."

Coldly, the captain asked, "From whom do I take orders, Mr. Kinzie?"

The trader's temper was up. He turned aside, trying to hold it in, muttering to himself and shaking his head.

Winnemeg, who had stood silent, addressed the captain. "Can you not leave the property within the fort, the Agency house? The Indians can make their own division after you have gone."

Captain Heald gave no reply. The interview was over. Kinzie whipped about, speaking fast. "If you think the Indians are your friends or friends to that flag flying at the post, you're wrong. Tecumseh and that blind brother of his got word to every tribe to turn against us, to kill Americans, to drive us out. Winnemeg, Black Partridge, To-pee-nee-bee, Wau-ban-see, these chiefs are friends of ours, but they can't

hold their men back." Seeing that his words were making no impression, he went on more hotly, "Maybe I can tell you something else you don't know. Your fort would have been attacked last fall if it hadn't been for me. Yes, me, Mr. Captain, me and my family. It was about us the Indians were thinking, us, their friends."

Captain Heald strode to the door and laid his hand upon the knob ready to show his visitors from the room. Confounded insolent fellow, he thought. I'd like to— With an effort he maintained appropriate dignity. "Mr. Kinzie, you do not wear a uniform. Has it occurred to you that if I stay here the British may attack from Mackinac? Dearborn may fall to them. We are not sufficiently fortified to meet that possibility. Naturally, that would not occur to you."

Kinzie shook his head in contemptuous pity. "Better for you and all the women and the children in your protection if your captors were the English—not Indians. I should have thought even you'd know that."

Heald stiffened. "There will be no capture."

Kinzie took his time moving to the door. "A fine march you'll make of it, Heald. You'll go fast—with women and children along with you. I can see the help you'll get from all the soldiers' wives hanging on to their husbands' necks. Soldiers! How many you got on the sick list now? 'Bout forty? What about the old fellows in the bunch? You've got some close on to seventy. A fine, brave march you'll make of it, going through hostile country and every man-jack among the Indians itching for a scalp—barring a friend here or there that *I* might have. I'll tell you something—"

"That's enough, Kinzie."

"My family won't go along with you! I wouldn't trust 'em in your hands far as you can throw a stone. Come along, Winnimeg."

The next morning, troops mustered for parade, Captain Heald read the evacuation order. In the silence with which

it was received there was a strong undercurrent of foreboding and alarm. The officers exchanged glances. They would be able to put in a word when Captain Heald called them together for a council.

But the day passed, and they were not summoned. Did the captain want no conference with his officers?

But surely, in a decision so important . . . At last, unsummoned, they presented themselves respectfully, asking to know just what his intentions might be. Captain Heald explained. He had sent out word to gather the Indians together. When they arrived, he would tell them that the fort was being abandoned and that its goods would be shared among them. Then he would ask for an escort to accompany the march to Fort Wayne, promising a large reward upon arrival. That was in accordance with the orders he had received, and that, in his opinion, was the only procedure. The Indians, fairly treated, would play fair. In the years since Fort Dearborn had been built, the Chicago Indians had always been friendly. That episode of last April, the death that visited Lee's place, had not been perpetrated by Pottawatomis. It was an incident which could be dismissed.

Captain Heald's explanation gave no comfort to the officers. They remonstrated, turning the interview into a council of war in which they pointed out the apparent weaknesses in the plan. But, failing to alter their captain's decision, they could only bow and withdraw and carry out his orders. Captain Heald was executing his duty as he saw it. In his opinion he would be worthy of censure if he acted otherwise. Discussion was at an end.

Gloom spread among the inhabitants of the fort. To many of them it seemed that there was a new temper among the Indians who came and went about the place, a surly insolence among the men, a furtive bustling excitement among the squaws. If only Captain Heald proved to be right in his judgment! The women of the fort woke at nights from

dreams of scalplings and torture, dreading to hear the awful "hu-hu-hu-hu" of the war whoop.

On the 12th, a large body of Indians having assembled, Captain Heald made ready to hold council with them upon the sands. He invited his officers to accompany him. They declined.

"I'll go along with you." Kinzie's face was grim. He turned to young Ronan. "You fellows here in the fort could train those big guns of yours onto that council meeting. Mightn't be a bad idea."

The two men stepped out. The council was held—with the guns swiveled round in that direction. (Kinzie's orders! Heald fumed to himself, just as though . . .)

Yes, the Indians would give an escort. The Indians were the friends of the white men. They agreed to what the white captain said. They were pleased by the gifts the white captain would give.

Heald and Kinzie walked back to the fort.

"You see?" said the captain. "It is all arranged."

"Good Heavens, man, you promised to give them everything!"

The captain looked blankly into Kinzie's face. "Why, everything we won't take along for our own use."

"The guns—the ammunition! Surely you won't put those in their hands! Why, not one of my traders in the last ten months—"

Heald reflected. "Possibly it would be unwise. On second thought, the guns and ammunition we don't need will be destroyed. Yes, and the whisky—"

Kinzie groaned. "But you *promised*. You already told them. If you break your promise to an Indian—Man, man, can't you see?"

The next day the goods were given out, blankets, calico, paints, utensils—the whole store of provisions, whatever was no longer needed. The Indians waited. Where was the fire-

water?—the guns? When night fell, they crept as close as the sentry would permit. They heard the sound of smashing. Barrel heads were being broken, the contents spilled. Guns and ammunition were being dropped into the well, into the river!

The white captain had broken his promise.

Into the fort on the 14th rode a small band of Miami who had come far and fast. Their leader, springing off his horse, hurried toward Captain Heald, and while that man was still wondering who this Indian might be, what message he had brought, Kinzie, coming upon the scene, greeted the newcomer with a shout.

“Captain Wells!”

Even at that, it took Heald a moment longer to make out that this man was white, not Indian. Wells, a distant relative of Kinzie’s, was one of those who had been stolen by Indians as a child. Recovered by his people some years later, he chose to go back among the Indians and live as one of them. His wife was a Miami. He was a chief in that nation.

Quickly he told his reason for coming. He had been at Fort Wayne. He had heard of the evacuation order sent to Fort Dearborn. He had come to say—

“Don’t go, Captain Heald. Stay here. You’ll be safer in—”

“Too late, Wells,” Kinzie cut in. “We can’t stay now. All our provisions have been given away. All our ammunition is destroyed. We’ve only got enough for the march.”

Wells’ eyes met Kinzie’s for a moment longer. Then he turned to Heald. “Captain, I offer my services and that of these men.” He indicated the fifteen Miami who had ridden into the yard with him. “I wish that there were more of us! We’ll ride with you.”

“Thank you,” said Heald. “I guess maybe—well—thank you.”

“When do you start? Today?”

“Tomorrow. At nine.”

Perhaps Heald was beginning to have his doubts. If so, they must have been a torture to him, for there was now no course to take but the one he had laid out.

During that afternoon the Indians held another council in which their anger at the white man's treachery was plainly expressed. And if more was needed, promptly after that Black Partridge, a prominent chief among the Pottawatomis, asked to see the commanding officer.

"Father," he said, "I come to deliver up to you the medal I wear. Americans gave it to me. Long have I worn it. I am a chief, but in our council the young men are many, and they do not listen to my words. I will not wear a token of peace and friendship when those are not the words my people speak."

It was the morning of the 15th.

Kinzie stood by the boat at the river bank, his eldest son beside him. It was a sizable boat and well loaded down. In it were Mrs. Kinzie, the four youngest children, their nurse, Grutte, a clerk of Mr. Kinzie's, two servants and the boatmen, besides two Indians—protectors of the little company.

"The lake is calm," Kinzie said. "No time at all you'll make the St. Joseph."

His wife stretched out a hand of entreaty. "Come with us. Do."

To-pee-nee-bee came down the bank. "Shaw-nee-aw-kee, maybe you go."

Kinzie shook his head. "I'll march with the troops. Maybe if I stick along with these fellows . . ."

To-pee-nee-bee laid his hand on his friend's shoulder urging, "Maybe you go in the boat. Better. No trouble for you."

Kinzie gave him a sharp glance. "Not going to be trouble for anyone if you and I can help it, is there? Come along, son. They've started the march." He gave a push to the boat, waved his farewell and started after the troops. To-pee-nee-bee followed him until they came up with the others. Then,

mingling with the Indian escort, he signaled to one of them, gave an order. The fellow slowed his pace, dropping to the rear of the procession that had just started out along the beach, the bands playing, Captain Wells and his Miamis at their head. Having let himself be passed by all the others, To-pee-nee-bee's messenger dropped into the shelter of a hummock. A moment later he wriggled his way to another, then rising to his feet, bent double, he started running for the mouth of the river.

The boat had just covered the winding half mile from the fort. At sight of To-pee-nee-bee's messenger, the Indians on board signaled the oarsmen to draw into the bank.

"What is it?" Mrs. Kinzie demanded of the man on the sand.

"To-pee-nee-bee say 'stay here.'"

"But my husband—"

The Indian directed that the boat be drawn in close to the bank, hidden by reeds. Midges rose from the marsh grass in a swarm. The heat of the August day even at that hour was intense. The children's nurse began to whimper, "Oh, M's Kinzie, what—"

"Be quiet," Mrs. Kinzie told her and sent a warning frown over the wondering children who, like their nurse, were inclined to whimper. Again she turned to the Indian who had taken command of them. "Why have you stopped us?"

"To-pee-nee-bee say maybe Shaw-nee-aw-kee come back."

Her husband *return!* Then—Oh, God, have mercy on all these women and children! No—it must not be—

Above the lap of water, the hum of the midges, came a sudden crackling of gunfire, sounding from less than two miles away. It came again, continued—

Mrs. Kinzie put her arms about her children and buried her face among them, silent. "To-pee-nee-bee say maybe Shaw-nee-aw-kee come back. . . ." Oh, he must, he must come back!

They had set out along the beach. It was easier to travel

where the sand was hard. They were a large company, some five hundred Indians in the escort. When they came to a spot where sand hills rose in a ridge between the beach and the prairie, the Indians kept to the ridge and to the prairie, while the white company kept to the beach, so that they were not one party going forward in a body, but two, divided.

From his place far at the head, Captain Wells' horse was seen to wheel, to turn about, to come galloping back.

"They're going to attack!" he yelled. "Form instantly—charge—"

The Indians were already shooting.

In the melee, the fifteen Miamis made off in a body, but Captain Wells, who had ridden at their head, was not among them. In that moment he knew where his allegiance lay, and it lay with the white man, though he had lived as a chief among Indians.

At his warning cry, the troops formed hastily and attacked the hills. But they were few and in the open. The Indians were many and sheltered by gullies and hummocks. The charging line of soldiers was broken and cast into confusion almost at once by Indians who poured down from the hills and swept into the little company, striking with tomahawks, knives, and gun butts while the gunfire went on from the dunes.

It was massacre. Men and women went down, scalped before the eyes of their friends, themselves beset and struggling, fighting with frantic desperation, doomed. In the sudden swirl of violent commotion in that tight little band, so greatly overwhelmed, men, women and horses and wagons in confusion, above the firing and the clamor of the fight, screams rose, mingling with the Indian war cries on the bright sands beside the lake. One Indian leaped into a cart where the children had been put together and scalped them all. Down on one knee, young Ensign Ronan continued to strike about him, still fighting. Captain Wells lay along the neck of his horse, loading and firing as he rode. An Indian was seen to cut out a white man's heart and eat it.



Black Partridge came between her and the blow

The women fought, resisting the Indians' attempts to drag them from their horses. One woman struck again and again at her attackers with such fury that she won the Indians' respect.

"The brave woman!" they laughed. "Do not hurt her!"

Here and there an Indian strove to protect a white friend. Lieutenant Helm's wife, Kinzie's stepdaughter, dodged a tomahawk aimed at her head, catching the blow on her shoulder. She grappled with the Indian, struggling to reach the scalping knife he wore in a scabbard on his breast. She was wrenched violently away by another Indian who dragged her to the lake, thrust her in and held her there—all but drowning. She recognized Black Partridge, a rescuer who had taken this rough means of saving her life, hiding her from the others. (The rescue by Black Partridge is the incident depicted in the statue of the Massacre, now in the building of The Chicago Historical Society.)

There was no hope of holding out. Helm caught hold of the half-breed boy in Kinzie's service and told him to tell the Indians that the white men would surrender, would come to terms. It would have been easy enough for the Indians to have finished the butchery, killing the handful that remained, but "terms" meant booty. The captives could be ransomed.

The firing ceased, the whoops died away, the commotion died down. Back along the beach came the survivors with their captors. They were a stricken lot. Scarcely a third of them were still alive, and of these nearly all had received an injury of one kind or another. There were wives without husbands and husbands without wives and mothers without their children.

Helped from the lake by Black Partridge, Mrs. Helm dragged herself along with that sorry company under the blazing swelter of the sun, her clothes heavy with water. Her stepfather came up to her and gave her news that her husband lived though he, like herself, was wounded. Pausing to shake the sand and water from her shoes, a squaw snatched the shoes from her. Supported by Black Partridge, she went

on as best she could. Another Indian came to give her his assistance. She knew him, Pee-so-tum. In his hand was a scalp. By the black ribbon on the queue, she recognized it as Captain Wells'.

The gunshots had died away. Mrs. Kinzie, standing up in the boat, saw the stragglers returning. Some of them passed close by her. An Indian was leading a horse. There was a woman on it, wounded.

"That is Mrs. Heald!" she cried, turning to one of Kinzie's clerks. "Run, Chandonnie, tell the Indian you will give him a mule if he will release her!"

The Indian thought the bargain doubtful, for he believed that Mrs. Heald was dying. If she died, would he get the mule? He was assured that he would, and with the additional promise of ten bottles of whisky, he handed over his captive.

Mrs. Heald was brought into the boat. She had not lain there long before another Indian was seen approaching, and his look was ugly. Mrs. Kinzie flung a buffalo robe over the wounded woman. "Lie still," she commanded. "Stop groaning." She looked up to face the vengeful Indian. He was seeking a trader named Burnett with whom he had a grudge to settle. "Only the family of the Shaw-nee-aw-kee are in the boat," Mrs. Kinzie told him, and he went away. And then—there was John Kinzie, safe and unharmed!

The boat went back upstream. The Kinzie family returned to their house. There Kinzie, working with a penknife, removed the bullet from Mrs. Heald's body. She had received seven wounds, her husband only two.

Black Partridge, Wau-ban-see and Kee-po-tah settled themselves on the porch of the Kinzie house to guard their friends. There they stayed all through that day and night and on into the next day. It was on the next day that the Indians burned Fort Dearborn. While the flames and smoke were rising across the river from the Kinzie house, a new party of Indians was seen approaching in canoes. They were

an angry lot, for they had not come in time to receive a share of Captain Heald's bounty or to gain a scalp or a captive. They were not Indians of this neighborhood. They did not know the Shaw-nee-aw-kee and his family.

Their faces blackened for war, they thrust by the guards on the porch and seated themselves in Kinzie's house and glared at the white faces. Black Partridge murmured to Wau-ban-see, "We have tried to save our friends in vain."

At this moment a whoop was heard outside, and Black Partridge looked out to see more newcomers landing from canoes, one of the party hastening up the slope in advance of the others. Black Partridge knew the man, and yet he asked, "Who are you?"

"I am the Sauganash!"

It was the half-breed, Billy Caldwell, and by replying, "I am the Englishman," he answered Black Partridge's question. He came as a white man, not as an Indian. He was a friend.

Entering the house, Billy Caldwell saw the sullen Indians with their blackened faces. "How now, my friends! I was told there were enemies here, but I see only friends. Why have you blackened your faces? Are you mourning for friends lost in battle? Or are you fasting? If so, ask our friend here, the Shaw-nee-aw-kee, and he will give you to eat. He is the Indians' friend and never yet refused what they had need of."

The Kinzies were out of danger. Shamed, the war party with the blackened faces slipped away.

In a few days the exodus began, the Indians setting out in one direction or another with the captives they would ransom. The Kinzies were escorted to St. Joseph and there delivered to the British Indian agent.

Nothing remained at Chicago but the smoldering logs of the fort, the deserted houses, and down on the sands, the unburied dead.

Ouilmette, the French-Canadian with his Pottawatomi wife, was the only white man who lived on in the place after the massacre. In years to come, Chicago would name a suburb for him, misspelling his name.

Chapter Four

TOO MANY INDIANS



Second Fort Dearborn, 1816

THE war of 1812 was concluded in 1814. In 1815, a hardy soul by the name of Dean stole back to the deserted waste and erected a house for himself on the lake shore near the river mouth. In 1816, Captain Hezekiah Bradley arrived with a company of soldiers. They busied themselves with the rebuilding of the fort and took time off to bury the bones which still lay bare to the sky on the sands a mile and a half away. The fort had been named Dearborn because that was the name of the Secretary of War who had been in office in 1803. Now there was some talk about naming the new fort after the Secretary of War then in office, but the notion

faded, and the name Dearborn remained. On the heels of the soldiers, John Kinzie, who had been petitioning the government for the rebuilding of the fort, returned with his family. Chicago was coming back to life.

The rejuvenation was slow, quite slow at first. During the war, the threat of attack by the British from the lakes had not made the shores attractive as a place to settle. And the handicaps which had retarded Chicago's expansion still existed—fear of the Indians and the lack of a waterway route which would serve the tide of westward migration that was so steadily rising. Settlers continued to pour out along the Ohio and spill into southern Illinois in increasing numbers. In 1818, there were 45,000 inhabitants in the area we now know as the state of Illinois, and most of these were settled round about Kaskaskia. It was time, the people thought, to be admitted to the Union. They applied, and though still something short in the required population, they were admitted. The state of Illinois was in with the others.

There was a bit of a flurry about setting the northern boundary. As first proposed, the state would have extended only as far north as a line drawn from the southern extremity of Lake Michigan. This would have left Chicago out of it. But luckily there were some strong-minded men who held out for a larger share of lake front, and so Chicago got in.

Illinois was called the Prairie State because it was here that the newcomers first saw prairie—"prairie" being the word given to this meadowland by their predecessors, the French, who saw it first. But as a matter of fact, Illinois was the border state between the wooded east and the treeless west where both intermingled. Being half prairie and half forest, Illinois could lay claim to being a state which represented both east and west and therefore the country as a whole.

Of its natural wealth the early settlers were scarcely aware, though the lead mines at Galena in the northwest were located almost at the outset, and even Marquette comments on what he believed to be mineral deposits in a cliff fronting the Mis-

issippi. The rich loam of the prairie was hidden gold to those early farmers whose wooden plows could not break the sod. Most of them, at any rate, had the idea that soil from cleared land was best. That was what they were used to. So they fell to the task of clearing woodlands and yanking out stumps in order to get at the earth. The prairie groves resounded to the ax and the saw and the heavy lurching tread of oxen. Log cabins went up, but not for long. They were soon replaced with board houses. The log cabin period was shorter in Illinois than it had been in the east. The white man's civilization was getting up speed.

On into the new-made state poured the settlers by flatboat, by keelboat, on foot, on horse and by wagon. In 1800, the west contained but one-tenth of the population of the whole country. By 1830, it would contain a third, and the westward expansion would still go on.

But with all this bustle to the south, at Chicago the winds blew over the long grasses, the wolf packs swerved in close on a hunt, Indians came and went or thrust up their tepees on the river banks, and the fur trade, that industry of the wilderness, was still being carried on.

Settlers were dribbling in, a mere trickle of the flow that was at such a flood along the Ohio. But among these first-comers were some whose names would be indelibly associated with the early history of Chicago and some whose names would stand out big when Chicago had become a city. And, desolate as Chicago seemed, the canal idea, Joliet's idea, was in men's minds. To go on hauling dinky little canoe loads across that portage, wading knee-deep in Mud Lake, that hollow between the Des Plaines and the Chicago River which was dry at one season and an inferno of mosquitoes and blood-suckers at another! No, that would not do. Chicago must have better than that. A practical water route to the south was needed, a suitable highway for goods and people.

In 1819, John C. Calhoun, Secretary of War, was urging

upon Congress the importance of the Illinois-Michigan canal, and among those first settlers in Chicago were men who would continue that demand, pressing it with energy and with persistence.

It has been said that the coming of settlers follows a pattern. First, lone-wolf trappers stalk the land. Then poor squatters drift in, and after them the well-to-do farmers with money and stock arrive. And lastly, the educated young men turn up, and they, presumably, are keen to see advantage and handle it with enterprise and profit.

In Chicago that pattern was jumbled from the start. Sable could scarcely be termed a poor squatter, though squatter he certainly was. Nor does "lone-wolf trapper" fit Kinzie, though that was how he started out, for when he first comes into the story it is as a prosperous trader and a man of property, having a number of men in his employment, both in Chicago and out over the wilderness routes. His house was no mean one-room log cabin. It was referred to as Kinzie's "mansion"—a trifle grandiloquent, we might think, but denoting the respect with which it was regarded. Educated young men were there—Dr. Alexander Wolcott, appointed to Chicago as an Indian agent in 1819, was a Yale man and the community's first resident doctor. But sometimes the lone-wolf trapper (who was supposed to head the procession) and the educated young man (who was supposed to wind it up) were one and the same person, as could be said of young Gurdon Saltonstall Hubbard, who first appeared in 1818. In Chicago these divisions, where they could be made, were not a matter of succeeding periods. Men of all four classifications were contemporaries. The lone-wolf trapper and the educated young man rubbed shoulders, the poor squatter had his holding alongside the man of property. And some men—the Beaubains for example—would have been hard to classify. Those exuberant French Canadians, thrifty and venturesome, would liven the scene for some time to come.

If there was a pattern in Chicago at that time, it was one of democracy.

The opening of the frontier gave a new and valid meaning to democracy. The principles, so nobly conceived when our government was founded, were a statement of purpose and intention. They were by no means a legal summary of conditions then in existence. With the last word added to the Bill of Rights, a great deal remained to be done throughout the country before the idea of democracy could begin to filter into factualities. What the founders of this republic had done was to give us an idea, a belief, and a plan to go by. The working out of that American plan in one field or another, in dealing with an old situation or a new one, was a task without a date line. It is still going on.

In Washington's time, conditions existed which we today would not call democratic. At his election, no man could vote who did not possess a certain amount of money and a certain amount of property. That was made the measure of a man's intelligence. Along the eastern seaboard, in the early years of our national existence, classes were quite sharply divided, and the opportunity for advancement lay with those who had the advantage at the start—family standing, an inherited estate, capital to invest in whatever enterprise might seem profitable. A man so fortunately situated was an honored figure in his community, while Tom Smith, the son of the blacksmith, would, no doubt, raise a son who in turn would be a blacksmith.

With the opening of the land beyond the Alleghenies came a change. Although here education and money also gave advantage, it was relatively slight, for the struggle with the wilderness called for personal qualities in the man, the rock-bottom stuff of character. The blacksmith's son who lacked the price of a conveyance and set out to walk a thousand miles could, with hardihood and courage and a native shrewdness, hope to profit richly and give to his son whatever ad-

vantage he himself might have felt the lack of. The wilderness had its own measurements of a man's worth, and they were not those by which the vote had been given or denied in Washington's election. If a man could survive that testing and win through, he was respected in the new communities of the west.

And in those young communities, class barriers were down. People had to work with each other and for each other, lending a hand wherever it was needed and taking help wherever they could get it. There were times when men would leave off their own labors to help another man get his house up, or a lady who had done fine needlework back in an eastern city would run across a black field at night to serve as midwife. At the long farm table the hands sat down with the owner. When a barn dance was held, the whole community joined in the social event.

And the sum of all this was a new spirit in the country, a spirit of self-belief, hope, ambition; a new friendliness and zest for living. Why, every man had a chance! Opportunity was for all. Come on, neighbor, get going!

That spirit would be felt all over the land, even back at the seaboard and in the capital at Washington. 1828 would see a new kind of president. Old Hickory, Andrew Jackson, one of the folks. Old Hickory would be something new in the way of presidents, heartsease to some and a scandal to others. Prior to his administration, there had been a dignified procession of Presidents, each one having had some connection with the first beginnings of government, being one of the original founding fathers in his own right or close to it, and stemming from that cultured and aristocratic circle which had planned so well, so wisely, having the knowledge and the vision and the honesty to set up the democratic plan and speak of opportunity for all while they themselves were certainly not the products of such a plan. Now the plan was working, and a man sat in the White House who had come

up the way of opportunity. There would be others like him—one, a man who had not learned to read or write until he was full-grown and taking lessons from his wife—and, of course, Abe Lincoln.

Yes, the plan was working.

What was happening in Chicago in those early days?

Oh, not much of anything. We can suppose that when Mrs. Kinzie returned to her "mansion" in 1816, she carried on about the dreadful state she found it in, what with cobwebs and the field mice and four years' neglect. But that winter they had school taught in Mr. Kinzie's bakehouse, and then in no time at all Nellie was a young lady and marrying young Mr. Wolcott and going to live in that odd house of his that made everyone laugh because it was different from all the others and had two additions built on it for all the world like two tails! That was in 1823, the year when Fort Dearborn was evacuated. The same year a scientific government expedition looked over Chicago and handed in a most unfavorable report: "Climate inhospitable, soil sterile, scenery monotonous and uninviting." The comments of Mr. Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, author and explorer, who had visited there in 1820, were much more pleasing. He spoke of a future Chicago as "a great thorofare for strangers, merchants and travellers" and went on to record, "the country round Chicago is the most fertile and beautiful that can be imagined. It consists of an intermixture of woods and prairies diversified with gentle slopes sometimes attaining the elevation of hills, and it is irrigated with a number of clear streams and rivers which throw their waters partly into Lake Michigan and partly into the Mississippi. As a farming country it presents the greatest facilities for raising stocks and grains . . ." At the time of his visit to Chicago he found a community of a dozen huts and some sixty souls. That was the year of the hard winter—twenty-two inches of snow on January 31 and the ice in the river eighteen inches thick. Archibald Clybourn settled that year.

1822-24 and Hubbard was blazing a trail from Danville to Fort Dearborn. That trail came right in along where State Street is today. Hubbard had come down the lake at the head of a string of bateaux in 1818, then a hardy, husky energetic young man of sixteen in the service of John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company. He had spent the following years on the forest trails and waterways, leading a life as active and adventurous as that of any lone-wolf trader, only with a shade more go to him from the start. The Indians called him "Pa-ea-ma-ta-be," the Swift Walker, and he was known to have covered—well, some say seventy, some say seventy-five miles in a single day. At twenty-two, the trail completed, he was in charge of all the American Fur Company's trade in Illinois, using Chicago as a port through which to ship his goods east by the lakes, and he was beginning to look ahead and figure out some other work he might move into, something more in keeping with the times. And the canal was in his mind, someone ought to introduce a bill into the legislature . . .

In 1825, the Reverend Isaac McCoy preached the first Protestant sermon in Chicago, and his presence there was a very pleasant topic of conversation. But something else happened in that year.

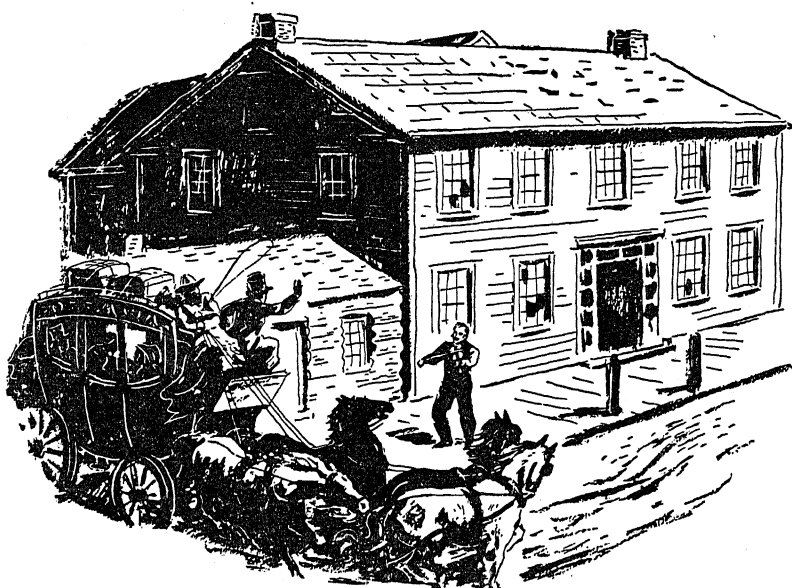
The Erie Canal opened.

That event, happening way off in the east, put Chicago on the map for the east-west flow of trade and for the westward-pushing settlers. The Ohio was no longer the only waterway that could carry that traffic. And the route via the Erie Canal and the lakes was far more convenient for those of the New England states. The Yankees who were on the move and coming west would pick that way, while those from the southern seaboard would still make use of the Ohio.

And yet—

Chicago's population didn't move. It remained just about where it had been.

What was wrong?



In 1826, Mark Beaubien opened a hotel

Well, too many Indians around, for one thing. Not safe country for a man to bring his family to. And what was there at Chicago to attract an enterprising settler? It was a backwoods hole in the mud, nothing much doing there.

Yet in 1826, Mark Beaubien opened a hotel near the Forks, as that spot was called where the river, at so short a distance from its destination, breaks into two branches, one coming in from the north, one from the south. As a matter of fact, though one speaks of the North Branch and the South Branch, it would be more accurate to think of the river as two rivers which meet about a mile west of the lake and, becoming one stream, there turns eastward, flowing into the lake. The "Y" that has since figured on Chicago emblems has its derivation from that meeting of the river "branches."

Mark's brother Jean had showed up in Chicago as far back as 1817, buying the house that the intrepid Mr. Dean had erected before the return of the garrison. The Beaubiens were

a light-hearted, life-loving pair of French-Canadians. Mark had his fiddle, and later Jean was to possess the first piano. By an assortment of marriages, Mark was the father of twenty-three children and Jean the father of nineteen. Some of those progeny, by virtue of possessing an Indian mother, would later claim a share of government bounty. The girl who had been nurse of the Kinzie children at the time of the massacre, Grutte, was the wife of Jean. Jean, among other occupations, served as a fur agent. Mark Beaubien apparently was a good host at his hotel, for he was to continue in that line, with other activities on the side. An account of the times describes him as "a tall, athletic, fine-appearing man, Frenchy and very polite, frank, open-hearted, generous to a fault and in his glory at a horse race."

This reference to horse racing makes one wonder if the sport had been adopted from the Indians. They frequently raced their ponies, and they, perhaps, joined in with Beaubien and the other settlers.

Another minister had come to town, the Methodist preacher, Father James Walker. But the event of the year was the Gubernatorial and Congressional elections held in the Agency House, where Dr. Wolcott presided. Though if these events raised hope for Chicago as a growing center of importance, the next year brought gloom. 1827 saw the Indians again on the warpath. It was the Winnebagos this time, and at the first news of trouble all the country round about was in a fright. Redskins had attacked soldiers on the upper Mississippi. A Canadian half-breed had been murdered at Prairie du Chien.

Governor Cass of Michigan had made a treaty with the Ottawa and Pottawatomie tribes in Chicago in 1821. He now went rushing about the country, seeking to persuade the Indians to keep the peace and to assure the settlers all would be well. Traveling as fast as he could—he used a birchbark canoe with twelve men at the paddles—he visited Galena and Prairie du Chien and came up the Illinois River and on to

Chicago—being stalled for a miserable night on Mud Lake.

In Chicago, a militia of from thirty to fifty men was organized under Jean Beaubien. Hubbard was then in Chicago, and he set off to fetch help from Danville, making one of the vigorous, swift trips for which he was noted. But when he returned he found that peace with the Winnebagos had been made at Chicago, and the flurry was over.

In the same year, McKee was carrying the mail by Indian pony every month to Fort Wayne, and Archibald Clybourne built the first slaughterhouse. But what hope was there of progress when a woman in a lonely house would cry out in terror if a shadow moved in the twilight of her kitchen, and a man at work in a field would rest on a spade to stare hard at a passing Indian trying to figure out what the sneaky beggar had in his head?

The government would have to clear the Indians out of the region and be done with it!

John Kinzie died in 1828 at the age of sixty-five. In the same year, the troops came back to the fort, and the people felt somewhat relieved. The following year, the first ferry, a canoe, was put in operation, and Wolf Tavern was built at the Forks. A young officer, Jeff Davis, whose name would be recalled years later, passed through, looking for deserters. Hubbard was out of the fur trade now. He drove in four hundred hogs for shipment by the lake, but ice stopped him, so he slaughtered them and piled them frozen in the snow along the bank.

In 1830, Chicago was surveyed and plotted. The town (only it wasn't that officially yet) as then laid out was bounded by what is now Madison Street on the south, Desplaines on the west, Kinzie on the north, and State on the east. East of State Street was government reservation. Only the "streets" were so muddy that if you wanted to get about the best way was to use the river. Most people did.

1831. Fort Dearborn was again evacuated. Mark Beaubien

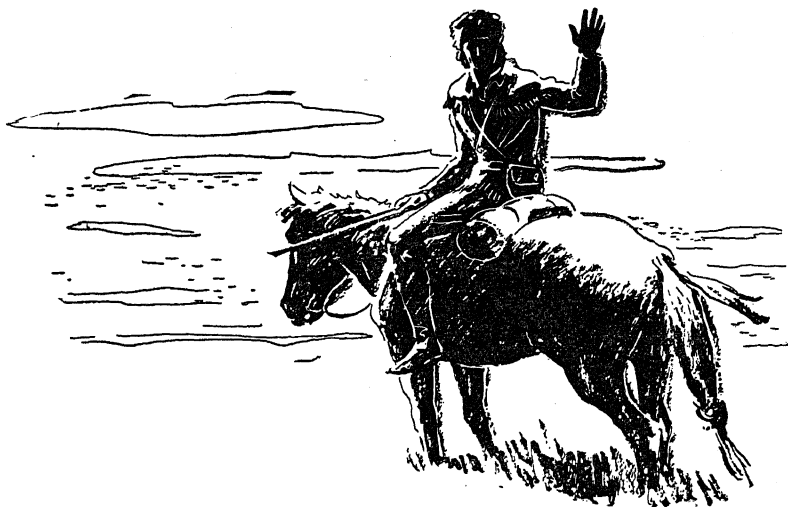
built another hotel, and of this he was truly proud. He named it the Sauganash after that half-breed, Billy Caldwell, who had proved so good a friend to the Kinzies at the time of the massacre. A sleigh pulling in there of a winter's night or a wagon on a summer's day could disgorge its occupants upon a sidewalk that ran the whole length of the building and had a lamp post at either end, and the occupants would be met by a host grandly arrayed in blue coat with brass buttons and nankeen trousers, a host who would fiddle for a dance or sing ballads for the sake of jollity.

Bravely, the little community was going ahead as best it could. Cook County was organized. A post office was established. A lighthouse was built. 1832 saw the erection of the first public building at the cost of twelve dollars. This was an estray pen, and it put some curb upon the hogs and cattle that wandered too freely where they would. The first Sunday school was held. John Watkins was hired to teach school. Philo Carpenter opened the first drugstore. Samuel Miller, who had married another of the Kinzie girls, built the first bridge over the North Branch. A floating bridge of logs replaced the ferry. Cattle were slaughtered back of Dole's warehouse. The first lake boat arrived. Maybe the Erie Canal was helping after all, for in one year the population had risen from 150 to 200, and many of these newcomers were New England folks.

But in May, 1832, the Black Hawk war started up. June 12 saw militia from Detroit at the fort and June 17 two companies of regulars arrived by steamboat, the first to come into these waters. They had an unwanted passenger on board, cholera. That grim visitor would come again and again.

Chapter Five

DRUMS DIE PROUDLY



He went with his mother's people

YOU white men may put on paper what you please, but again I tell you, I never sold any lands higher up the Mississippi than the Rocky River."

And how had Quash-quame, the Sauk chief, come to sell the lands up to Rock Island?

In 1804, a relative of his had been taken by the white government, accused of murder, and put in jail at St. Louis. There Quash-quame and another Sauk chief and a chief of the Fox nation had gone to seek his liberation. They had been told Quash-quame's relative would be released if the land was sold—sold, however, according to a treaty which per-

mitted the Indians "to live and hunt on the lands so ceded, as long as the aforesaid lands belong to the United States." To that they had agreed.

But the Sauk nation and the Fox nation had not been consulted. The other chiefs had no hand in this treaty. They did not know that it existed. When, once a year, the government paid them \$1,000 according to the treaty terms, they believed the money was a gift. The British had given them gifts, so why not the Americans?

When, in 1818, they learned that the money was payment for lands which had been sold, they were astounded, and they refused the payment, declaring that it was not true that they had sold their land. From the papers of Thomas Forsythe, who was the agent of the Sauks and Foxes until 1830, we learn: "The Black Hawk in particular made a great noise about this land, and would never receive any part of the annuities from that time forward. He always denied the authority of Quash-quame and others to sell any part of their lands and told the Indians not to receive any presents or annuities from any American—otherwise their lands would be claimed at some future day."

But the treaty, if it were to be honored, gave to the red men use of those lands not yet purchased by the whites. This, however, was ignored by squatters who, having taken possession, claimed the land for themselves. They weren't going to have Indians sticking up tepees in *their* back yards or chasing deer across the farmlands *they* had gone to work on and plowed. In 1827, a dozen squatter families arrived at the Sauk village at the mouth of Rock River while the Indians were away. They proceeded to destroy the Indian property they found there and to settle and to plow the fields where Indian dead were buried.

The Indians complained to their agent, Mr. Forsythe, giving a minute description of the damage done. But the squatters insisted that the Indians should be removed, saying that as soon as the land was put up for sale they, the squatters, would

buy it. "It became needless for me to show them the treaty," Mr. Forsythe's account continues, "and the right the Indians had to remain on the land. They tried every method to annoy the Indians, by shooting their dogs, claiming their horses; complaining that the Indians' horses broke into their corn-fields—selling whisky for the most trifling articles, contrary to the wishes and requests of the chiefs, particularly the Black Hawk, who both solicited and threatened them on the subject, but all to no purpose."

But in 1828 when the land was put up for sale, few of the squatters made a purchase. They continued to squat on government land to which the Indian had a right.

In 1832, Black Hawk and a party of Indians numbering close to four hundred crossed over from Iowa, where they had removed, back to Illinois, their own land. They were not a war party. Women and children were in the group, and it was their intention to go north to Winnebago in Wisconsin. But that was not understood by the white men, and at sight of so many Indians on the move there was general alarm. Governor Reynolds proclaimed a "state of actual invasion," and troops were sent against them. Major Isiah Stillman and his forces came upon the Indian encampment. Black Hawk sent three braves with white flags to the soldiers, clearly indicating the peaceful intention of the tribe, but the shooting began. It turned into a battle in which the soldiers were routed.

From then on Black Hawk's men fought, Indian fashion, from behind a clump of trees or a shelter of rock, and fear stalked the country. Black Hawk was a leader among Indians, and the dead Tecumseh's words were in his head, words of bitter reproach spoken to the white man: "Brother, you wish to prevent the Indians to do as we wish them, to unite and let them consider their lands as the common property of the whole . . . We have endeavored to level all distinctions, to destroy village chiefs, by whom all mischief is done. It is they who sell our lands to Americans. Brother, this land that was

sold and the goods that were given for it, was done only by a few . . . in the future we are prepared to punish those who may propose to sell land. If you continue to purchase them it will make war . . .”

But Black Hawk was intelligent enough to know his men could not win against the white man. The years had proved that. Indians might kill white men here and there. The white man could kill a race.

By July his people were weakened by hunger, and Black Hawk was willing to surrender. He wanted to lead his defeated people back to Iowa. But again his offer of a truce was ignored, and at the battle of Bad Axe most of his braves were killed. The cruelty and treachery of which the Indians had been so often accused were here displayed by the white men. The soldiers turned into savages. They scalped the Indians. They inflicted indescribable cruelty upon them. Those Indians who managed to escape into Iowa fell into the hands of their enemies, the Sioux. The nations of the Fox and Sauk were broken.

What kind of a man was Black Hawk?

Forsythe writes, “It is very well known, by all who know the Black Hawk, that he has always been considered a friend to the whites. Often has he taken into his lodge the wearied white man, given him good food to eat, and a good blanket to sleep on before the fire. Many a good meal has *The Prophet* given to people traveling past his village, and very many stray horses has he recovered from the Indians and restored to their rightful owners without asking any recompense whatever.”

Black Hawk was captured. He was taken on a tour of the country, which was intended to show him the state of its development, the white man's power, and the folly of any further resistance. The Federal Writers' book on Illinois says, “Aged and broken, he dictated his fine simple *Autobiography* with its dedication to the general who had defeated him in war. ‘That you may never experience,’ he wrote, ‘the humility that the power of the American Government has reduced me

to, is the wish of him who, in his native forests, was once proud and bold as yourself.' ”

He followed his pitiful band of survivors into Iowa and died within five years.

And the other Indians in that part of the country? They were knowing defeat of another kind but equally destroying—hunger. The winter had been mild. Little snow had fallen, and the deer were hard to track. The abundant game Marquette had seen was gone. The coming of the white man had driven away the Indians' source of food.

Kinzie's daughter-in-law, whose husband was then Indian agent at Winnebago, tells us, in *Wau-Bun*, of the suffering that gripped the Indians. They made soup of the bark of the slippery elm and of acorns. They crawled along the portage ways and laid down to die in the ditches. At Fort Winnebago, the white people themselves faced hunger, for a supply ship had not arrived. Yet to them the Indians came begging in such desperate and piteous numbers that “we were soon forced to keep both doors and windows fast to shut out the sight of misery we could not relieve. If a door was opened for the admission of a member of the family, some wretched (Indian) mother would rush in, grasp the hand of my infant and placing that of her famishing child within it, tell us pleadingly that he was imploring ‘his little brother’ for food. . . . It was in vain we screened the lower portion of our windows with curtains. They would climb up on the outside, and tier upon tier of gaunt, wretched faces would peer in above to watch us, to see if indeed we were as ill provided as we represented ourselves.”

The Indians were ready to sign on the dotted line. They were beaten and they knew it. In the fall of 1833, they gathered at Chicago, prepared to cede all their lands east of the Mississippi.

Not that they wished to, and they made that clear. When the white official opened negotiations by saying that the Great

White Father in Washington had been informed that they wished to sell their lands, the blunt rejoinder was that their Great White Father "must have seen a bad bird who told him a lie." But of what use was pleading or protest? The white men were greedy for land. The white men had power. Yes, the Indians would consider.

They took their time about considering, postponing the council from one day to the next, dragging out the negotiations. And there was much to be negotiated. One-third of the money they were to receive was set aside for "claims"—payments of debts of one kind or another, and the result was a scramble for plunder in which half-breeds and white men with Indian wives were among the grabbers.

Round about Chicago the clustered tepees stood. The Indians were many in number, chiefs of the Pottawatomie tribe and their allies, their young men, their squaws and their papooses. They overran the place, and Chicago was already congested, for at the first Indian scare, all the settlers round about had sought safety in Chicago, willing to sleep on the floors when every bed was filled. Old Indians blinked in the sun squatting in a huddle, smoking in the shelter of a dune, young Indians raced their ponies, squaws bustled from one tepee to another. We are told, "Most commonly, they were mounted on horses and appareled in their best manner and decorated with medals, silver bands and feathers. The gaudy and showy dresses of these troops of Indians, with the jingling caused by the striking of these ornaments, and their spirited manner of riding, created a scene novel as it was interesting."

But of this gathering at Chicago, Charles Latrobe, the English traveler, had this to say, "You will find horse dealers and horse stealers—rogues of every description, white, black, brown and red—half-breeds, quarter-breeds and men of no breed at all, sharpers of every degree, peddlars, grog-sellers. The little village was in an uproar from morning till night. . . . It is a grievous thing that the government is not strong-handed enough to put a stop to the shameful and scandalous

sale of whisky to these poor miserable wretches. . . . So long as it can be said with truth that drunkenness was not guarded against and that the means were furnished at the very time of the treaty and under the very noses of the commissioners—how can it be expected but a stigma will attend every transaction of this kind? The sin may lie at the door of the individuals more immediately in contact with them, but for the character of the people as a nation, it should be guarded against beyond a possibility of transgression. Who will believe that any act, however formally executed by the chiefs, is valid, as long as it is known that whisky was one of the parties to the treaty!”

The traveler was not the only one who deplored this final debauching of the Indians. The Reverend Jeremiah Porter looked with horror on the rowdyism and the drunkenness, and the good people of Chicago gathered round him while he prayed.

But at last the treaty was signed. Black Hawk had pleaded, “We do not know what we sign with the goosequill,” but the Indians knew this time—it was good-by forever to the land that had been their home, their hunting ground, their burial place. They must move into the treeless plains across the Mississippi among hostile tribes who would resent their coming.

In the final exodus went some who might have stayed and prospered with the white man had they chosen to. One was the “Sauganash,” Billy Caldwell, always a well-liked figure among the Chicago settlers. Another was Medore Beaubien, son of Jean. Half-breed though he was, he had been east to college, and he had returned to prove himself an able businessman, well thought of by ladies for his fine appearance and so esteemed by neighbors that he had been chosen member of the first town council. But the dark blood stirred with a strange force within him. When his mother’s people went, he went along with them.

Once more only would Chicago see the Indian tribes. In August, 1835, they came, five thousand of them, to collect the

final miserable bounty that was due to them, whisky and money and goods. And there they danced—for the last time.

The history of the dance, old as it is, going back to the earliest records, holds many accounts of celebrated dances—pagan sacrificial rites, bacchanals in Greece and Rome, elaborate ballets staged by the Medici, and at the French Court, and of the Carmagnole danced about the guillotine, and many another expression, magnificent or terrible. But no record in dance history equals the tragic fury of that Chicago ballet.

The Indian life had been a dance, formal, rhythmic, marked with ceremony and with music. That had been shattered. There was no man among the tribes who would again give that grace of greeting once bestowed upon Marquette. No, not to any white man, ever. The fury of hell was in that mass expression of a race in the sunlight of the hot August afternoon in the town beside the lake, the wild hatred of the defeated, the self-loathing of the broken, the mighty grief of a people who had seen their country taken from them, their leaders dishonored, their young men debauched.

The dance began. Musicians led the way, chanting, beating upon tom-toms, striking one stick against another. After them came the braves, arrayed for war, naked but for their loin cloths and feathers. War paint transformed their faces into hideous, ferocious masks. War paint striped their gleaming, sweating bodies and was streaked over with the blood of self-inflicted wounds. Bright smears and blotches of crazy vivid colors swayed in rhythm, massed together, winding slowly down the streets. It was a fantastic flow animate with human fury, keeping to the beat of tom-toms, unified in energy, the shared frenzy at high pitch, tumultuous and raging. Knives and tomahawks swung. Sunlight leaped along a blade, glinted off a jingling silver ornament. Howling and shrieking, raising the long-dreaded war whoop, these beings of lost identity trod out the steady rhythmic patterns of their dance of hate before each house they passed, and white men went indoors, stayed close by their womenfolk and children.

John D. Caton, afterward Chief Justice of Illinois, saw that tremendous ballet, watching with others from a window. There were some who could not watch, but Caton set it down:

"Their eyes were wild and bloodshot, their countenances had assumed an expression of all the worst passions which can find a place in the breast of a savage, fierce anger, terrible hate, dire revenge; remorseless cruelty, all were expressed in their terrible features. Their tomahawks and clubs were thrown and brandished about in every direction with the most terrible ferocity, and with a force and energy that could only result from the highest excitement, and with every step and every gesture they uttered the most frightful yells. The dance, which was ever continued, consisted of leaps and spasmodic steps, now forward and now back or sideways with the whole body distorted into every unnatural position, most generally stooping forward, with the head and face thrown up, the back arched down, first one foot thrown forward and then withdrawn and the other similarly, all with a movement almost as quick as lightning, while the yells and screams they uttered were broken up and multiplied and rendered all the more hideous by a rapid clapping of the mouth with the hand . . . the rear was still two hundred yards off and all the intervening space, including the bridge, was covered with this raging savagery, glistening in the sun, reeking with steaming sweat, fairly frothing at the mouth . . . it seemed as if we had a picture of hell itself before us . . . a carnival of the damned spirits . . ."

They danced their tragedy. The sun went down. The beating of the drums died away. In the warm dark of the night the sultry air stood still, the awful vibrancy of what had been still electric in the air, exhausting. No white man, woman or child had been touched, but they were all injured people there. Something had transpired before their eyes. . . .

In the morning the trek had started. With the last Indian



They danced their tragedy

off the land forever, the white man breathed relief—and forgot him.

We Americans are a freedom-loving people. We'll fight and die for freedom lest we lose it. We've proved that in the past. We're proving it again. But loving freedom when it is *your* freedom that's at stake is pretty common with people all over the world. We may say that some men have got a way of thinking that makes them more independent, more aware of individuality, than others, and, along with some other democratic nations who believe in the individual, we can lay claim to that. We don't like the regimentation and the mass-thinking—or lack of thinking—that some people fall for, and I don't believe we could be made to like it, no, not even in that thousand years that Hitler once was talking

of. And, as history sets out the record, we haven't done too badly, lined up with the rest of the world. We've respected freedom sometimes even when it wasn't *our* freedom that was at stake, as in the case of the Philippines. But where the Indians were concerned—

All right, that was a long while back, and people had a different way of looking at it then, and recently our government has gone way, way ahead in doing right by the Indians alive today. Still, let it be written down that freedom, not ours, but somebody else's, suffered in this country. It's worth writing down. It should be written down all over the world in every country where some *other* people's freedom suffered—and that would mean a lot of writing down. But maybe it would help to keep it clear to us what freedom-loving ought to mean. Freedom-respecting might be a better phrase. We'll need to be remembering that in the long, long years to come, getting along with the rest of the world.

Chapter Six

FIRSTS



Along the muddy roads came the wagons

THEY had not waited for the Indians to go. Once they were certain that menace would shortly be at an end, Chicagoans looked to the future.

August 5, 1833, Chicago was incorporated as a town, and five days later the town trustees were elected. Some years before, Hubbard had introduced a bill into the state legislature to authorize the digging of the canal. Men were prophesying what that would mean. One man was bold enough to predict a population of five thousand within five years. He was laughed at as a wild visionary, but of course everyone *hoped*.

A canal had been authorized by Congress in 1827. Still, for a while, it was nip and tuck whether Chicago would get it. One young fellow by the name of Stephen A. Douglas was saying *he* thought the best place for a canal would be down by Calumet Lake, fourteen miles to the south, and some people listened to him. Worse still, both Milwaukee and Michigan City were saying they had *good* harbors, *they* were the gateways to the west. And Michigan City had a population of three thousand to Chicago's probable three hundred. However, that young army engineer, Jefferson Davis, held out for Chicago, and in March, Congress voted \$25,000 to improve the harbor. So the sandbar would be done away with and the river put straight, and that was going to be a start in the right direction. The dredging began July 1. Straightening the river meant that some part of the land on which the first Fort Dearborn stood would be cut away, the river flowing over the site of the northernmost end.

People were coming in—via the Erie Canal at last; some of them who had come a long way by water and who had said their good-bys back in Norway fiords and Swedish forests and in little boreens beside thatched cottages. There was work to be found in Chicago now—plenty of it. Men came in pursuit of the dollars and the dream—freedom, opportunity, land of promise.

Town lots were put up for sale. Some lots had been sold back in 1830. James Kinzie had bought some of them then for the sum of \$418 which, in little more than half a century, would be valued at \$1,042,000. In 1833, the lots sold so well that some of the land—most of it in fact—which had been reserved as school land was put up for auction at \$60.20 an acre, and it netted a total of \$33,865. A new hotel was built, the Tremont. The Sauganash could no longer handle all the customers. New houses were going up on every side. In among the log buildings rose the lighter ones of board construction that were called "Balloon" houses and which were to win for early Chicago the nickname "Slab City." Along with their

erection, the first fire ordinance was passed prohibiting stove pipes through roofs unless guarded. The simmering pots on the crane in the fireplace were passing into history.

It was the time of "firsts." The first newspaper—*The Chicago Democrat*, published by John Calhoun; the first case of larceny, prosecuted by Lawyer John D. Caton; the first mass, said by Father St. Cyr in Mark Beaubien's house. There would be many "firsts" to follow in a proud procession. That year Kinzie's son, John H., brought his wife to town, coming down from Winnebago on horseback and by canoe and nearly getting lost on the wintry prairie, more desolate, more friendless now than in Indian days. One settler they had passed, living in a crude hut in the waste, was a quiet young man by the name of Hamilton, son of Alexander.

In 1834, Gurdon Hubbard settled in Chicago. That year a boat under full sail entered the river, proving the harbor a success. Real estate continued to boom, though the "slews" were bad. The worst one was at State Street, where a seeping gully drained into the river and there was always mud. The livestock continued to roam at will and slaughtering was done in front of the Tremont Hotel. Cholera paid another visit and took its toll. During its stay "the supervisor was authorized to compel every male person over twenty-one to work on the streets and alleys for the purpose of cleaning them." In August, a book and stationery store was opened, and in December the Chicago Lyceum for social and intellectual pursuits was instituted. A debating society, presided over by Jean Beaubien, met in the fort for warm discussions of Jacksonian democracy. And Volume I of the *Chicago Democrat* carried this insertion:

"The ladies and gentlemen of Chicago are most respectfully informed that Mr. Bowers, Professeur de Tours Amusants, has arrived in town and will give an exhibition at the house of Mr. D. Graves on Monday evening next . . . Admission 50¢, children, half price. Performance to commence at early candlelight."

Harriet Martineau, another English traveler, was surprised "to receive, from Chicago women, when she arrived in the village, a bouquet of prairie flowers and although it startled her to find 'a family of half-breeds setting up a carriage and wearing fine jewelry,' she went on to say 'there is some allowable pride in the place about its society. It is a remarkable thing to meet such an assemblage of educated, refined, and wealthy personages, as may be found there, living in small, inconvenient houses on the edge of a wild prairie.' "

Chicagoans might have been pleased by her good impressions of them but they would never have forgiven her if they had heard her call their town a village! But the prairie was certainly wild. When the wolf packs came in too close the townspeople went out on a hunt. A bear was killed close in during 1833.

If a town had a harbor it ought to have boats. The year of '35, two hundred and fifty-five sailing boats put into Chicago, and Chicago started building her own. *Clarissa*, a "first," was launched in May. That year immigrants came in such numbers that they had to sleep on floors, and provisions were scarce. Flour sold at twenty dollars a barrel. The courthouse was erected, the fire department (volunteer) established, and the first bank opened. A local account asserted, "There are now upward of fifty business houses, four large forwarding houses, eight taverns, two printing offices, one steam sawmill, one brewery and twenty-five mechanics shops of all kinds." The Chicago Harmonic Society gave its first concert in the Presbyterian Church. The Board of Town Trustees prohibited gambling, the Sunday sale of liquor, and the firing of guns and pistols in the streets. And William B. Ogden came to town.

1836—The canal! July 4, the work began. Oh, there was no longer any doubt which way Chicago headed! The cost had loomed prohibitively high, but there were no long faces in Chicago. Men said, "Hang the cost!" and went ahead, and soon 2,000 men were digging, and all Chicago was elated.

Why, in a few years . . . Sure as God made little apples . . .

There is a story told in *Chicago's Great Century*, by Henry Justin Smith, of a judge who, mounting a barrel on that July 4, addressed the canal diggers in a fine burst of prophecy.

"In twenty years you'll see 20,000 people in Chicago! In fifty years you'll see 50,000 people in—"

An Irishman in the crowd called back, "Judge, we won't be here, so we can't see how big a lie you're telling."

The judge, aroused, persisted, "Fellow-citizens, in a hundred years you'll see a hundred thousand!"

This was too much for the boys. They took him off the barrel and threw water in his face.

The Irishman said, "Arrah, Judge, if we hadn't stopped you, you'd have made it a million!"

Land boomed again. Lots on Lake Street which had sold for \$300 in '34 were resold now for \$60,000. Ogden, who had come into town to unload some real estate a relative of his had been foolish enough to buy, began to see the light when he got the original price of the investment for one-third of the property. He stopped selling and held on. There was something going on here, something big that a man should get into . . . Right then he became a Chicago man for keeps.

Long John Wentworth came in that year, his boots in his hand. Out of Vermont and Dartmouth, he had walked the last part of the way, coming on foot from Michigan City when the \$100 with which he had left home had been used up in travel. He arrived October 25, met an old college chum on the street who gave him a welcome hand—and Wentworth bought the *Chicago Democrat*, November 23.

People were talking about railroads. It would be a good thing now if there was some way of Chicago hitching up with "the diggings" out to the west . . . Of course, it was still only talk. The Chicago and Galena railroad was incorporated; two days later, the Illinois Central. And in the meantime, stagecoaches had found their way up from the south. Forty steamboats and three hundred and eighty-three sailing boats

put in that year. Chicago was on the map now, solid. The troops at the fort weren't needed any more. They left for good.

By 1837, the population was 8,000. Chicago incorporated as a city with six wards and William B. Ogden as mayor. Kinzie's son made a try for office, but Kinzie was a Whig and Ogden a Democrat, and the Democrats were in. A motto was chosen, "Urbs in Horta—a city in a garden"—for there were then a number of gardens round the houses, and those who chose the motto must have hoped that pleasing prospect would be retained. But it was only a pretty passing fancy that would be lost in the rush of growth, and some years later the motto was dropped.

Rush Medical School was granted a charter that year. A permanent Board of Health was established; the Cook County Medical Society had held its first meeting two years before. A theatrical company turned up and held their show in the Sauganash. Daniel Webster visited in June and put up at the mayor's house.

There was a financial panic in '37. A policy of state improvements had been rioting along with every county making a grab at the state coffer and the result was that the state was going to groan along under a heavy debt for fifty years to come. The panic was national, and Chicago was hard hit. The mayor himself, who had invested heavily in railroads—soon-to-be, was hit as hard as the rest, but when other men whose quickly made fortunes were dwindling, appealed for legislation to suspend all private and public debts, the mayor filled his office nobly.

In *Giants Gone*, by Ernest Poole, we are told that, addressing a heated meeting, he appealed, "Do not dishonor yourselves and our city! Remember that many a fortress has been saved by the courage of the garrison in concealing its weaknesses! Loss of fortune may be repaired, but dishonor is a stumbling block to the confidence of the world! I have suffered loss

with you, but I hope I have lost nothing but money!" Heedful, a city script was issued, and Chicago grimly set itself to pull through with honest vigor, its reputation and its credit untarnished in the eyes of businessmen all over the country.

And pull through they did, for both men and produce continued to pour in, work on the canal went on, and the panic was short lived.

Perhaps the actors at the Sauganash—they had presented Kotzebue's *The Stranger*—liked the reception they had received. It may be that the *Professeur de Tours Amusants* had met with an appreciative audience. Or possibly the circus, "The Grand Equestrian Arena," which had been offered under canvas back in '35 had turned in a good report. Word was spreading among troopers that Chicago was worth taking a chance on, and the Jefferson family decided to include it in their tour. Joe Jefferson, who was to be so dearly loved throughout America for his portrayal of Rip Van Winkle, was then a boy. In his autobiography, he records his first impression of the "New Town of Chicago" which "had just turned from an Indian village into a thriving little place."

They came by steamboat—"Off we go ashore and walk through the busy little town . . . people hurrying to and fro, frame buildings going up, board sidewalks going down, new hotels, new churches, new theaters, everything new. Saw and hammer—saw, saw, bang, bang—look out for the drays!—bright and muddy streets—gaudy-colored calicos—blue and red flannels and striped ticking hanging outside the dry goods stores—bar rooms—real estate offices—attorneys-at-law—oceans of them!"

They played either in the Rialto Theater, a converted auction room, or in the new Saloon Building, which had the finest hall in Chicago and was used for public entertainments. A permanent theater building was not built until 1847. Wherever they gave that first presentation, it was well received.

The Jeffersons would come again. Chicago was a show town from then on.

Jefferson speaks of the bright colorful dresses worn. It was frequently a matter of remark in those days, not only in Chicago but throughout America, and English writers often commented on it. It seems to have been a change from duller, darker clothes worn previously. Perhaps the excitable American climate, with its extremes of cold and heat and its luminous, sunshiny days—nowhere more changeable, more stimulating, than in Chicago—was having its effect upon the settlers, that they, like the Indians, had turned to bright colors.

There is a story often told of a newcomer in Chicago who complains about the temperature.

"You don't like our weather?" a Chicagoan asks brightly. "Oh well, just wait a few minutes, it'll change."

In 1839, a small incident occurred. No one paid much attention to it then. A runaway Negro slave came up from the South. He was hidden, smuggled aboard a steamer, shipped over to Canada. That was the first known use of the Underground Railway in Chicago, a mere straw in the wind that hinted which way the wind would blow when the storm arose. And in 1840, the Chicago Anti-Slavery Society held its first meeting.

The "roaring forties" came on. 1842 found Chicago glutted with produce, her shipping facilities straining to cope with the demand laid upon them. Iron-tipped plows dragged by two, sometimes four, oxen were breaking the prairies to the south—the steel plow had not yet been invented. Along the muddy roads came the wagons bearing the wheat. They came, five or six yoke of oxen doing the hauling, from as far as two hundred and fifty miles away. By 1847 there would be a line of wagons, eighty at a time. Drivers were "a crew" who "set sail," and often enough they had a rough passage, stick-

ing axle deep in the mud. In came the droves of cattle, herded along the roads, raising a cloud of dust if the season was dry. '42 saw the first cattle slaughtered for the eastern market by Archibald Clybourne and Gurdon Hubbard. Bull's Head Tavern had become an early stockyard.

And still the people came. The prairie schooners had found their way to Chicago. On the road from the east, that, following the ancient Indian trail, curved around the lake and ran along the shore, the conestoga wagons lurched and jolted, bearing families with all their furniture and belongings stored in the curved belly of the wagon, so designed that the load would not shift when the vehicles went up a hill or down. And often enough, the newcomer brought goods to stock a store or sell along the way—dry goods, pots and pans, needles and scissors and those many small devices so necessary to a household. There would be great excitement when the merchant put up his wares to sell, and the ladies made their selections from bales of calico or even silk. One good silk dress was an investment that did duty for years. No one in those days felt the necessity of having new dresses with the change of seasons or even of years. And considering the yards and yards of material one dress consumed new dresses *were* an investment. Silks in those days, often of heavy faille, were made to last. They did not rot in a year. My grandmother's wedding dress, when last I saw it a few years back, was still in good condition.

Along with the people from the eastern states, the immigrant flow continued, often coming by boat, shipped through in lots on their arrival in New York. John Wentworth, he who had walked in, boots in hand, later on recalling those days, said, "We had people from almost every clime and almost every opinion. We had Jews and Christians, Protestants, Catholics and infidels; among Protestants there were Calvinists and Armenians. Nearly every language was represented. Some people had seen much of the world and some very little. Some were quite learned and some were ignorant."

The melting pot bubbled at Chicago. By 1850, out of a population of 28,269, there were 6,096 Irish, 5,094 German, 1,883 Welsh and English, 610 Scottish, and 240 southern European, leaving some 14,346 of native stock. By 1860, half the population would be foreign-born.

In 1840, P. T. Barnum presented a musical company for three concerts in the Saloon Building. In 1843, the first Chicago Directory was issued. It tells us, along with sober, prideful facts on the volume of commerce, that the Young Men's Association, with headquarters in the Saloon Building, possessed a library of four hundred volumes available to members, and "any member may have the privilege of introducing strangers to the rooms of the association." Also, "Public lectures are provided for by the rules of the association and are held regularly during the winter months."

Newspaper offices and publishing days are listed: *Better Covenant*, Saturday; *Chicago Democrat*, Wednesday; *Chicago Express*, Tuesday; *North Western Baptist*, semi-monthly; *Prairie Farmer*, monthly; *Western Citizen*, Thursday.

Rush Medical College had four professors listed and one "Prosector to the Professor of Anatomy." We are informed that, "This institution is now in successful operation" and also that "good board and room can be obtained in Chicago at from \$1.50 to \$2.00 a week." A free lance, Dr. Tew, "phrenological and magnetic examiner," might "be consulted on all cases of nervous and mental difficulty . . ." Perhaps even then, some Chicagoans were feeling the strain of a life of bustle. "Common schools" show eight teachers on their staffs, but there was also a Chicago Female Seminary; "the object of this institution is to give young ladies a thorough, practical education, to develop and mould the character, to cultivate the manners and form correct habits."

Two hairdressers are set down, but it might surprise you to know that their advertisements were addressed to the male sex. Oliver C. Heasen was both a barber and a fashionable

hairdresser, and he told his clients that he had perfumery for sale. A. J. Miller advertised "French pomatum, an article superior to every other kind of hair oil," and "cigars of the best quality on hand." No wonder the ladies tatted antimacassars for the backs of their enduring, horse-hair chairs. And the smooth-faced era had given way to beards and half-whiskers. Was this another influence of the rugged new west and pioneering?

The hotels, some listed as temperance houses, asserted attractive claims. "Convenient to all the principal steamboat warehouses and within a few rods of the northern, southern, eastern and western stage offices—" (Chicago was the hub of travel!) ". . . The post office and reading room; the sitting and lodging rooms are large and airy, furnished with bells . . . good stabling, dry yards . . . hot meals at all hours . . . fresh oysters . . . boarders accommodated at prices to suit the times."

Then came the prideful facts:

	Exports	Imports
1836	\$1,000.64.....	\$325,203.90
1837	11,065.00.....	373,667.12
1838	16,044.75.....	630,980.26
	and so on down to	
1842	659,305.20.....	664,347.86

And the articles exported in '42: Wheat, corn, oats, peas, barley, flaxseed, hides, brooms, maple sugar, lead, feathers, furs and peltries, flour, beef, pork and hams, fish, lard, tallow, soap, candles, tobacco, butter, wool.

The Directory adds, "During the present season 14,356 barrels of beef have been packed at the several packing houses in the city; only a small portion of this has been exported. The quantity of hides and tallow is not known, but will bear a proportion to the beef. An amount of pork will be put up here during the coming winter, greatly exceeding any former season. No statement in regard to this department can be made in this connection, as business is just commencing."

Could anyone then foresee how that business "just commencing" would swell to a giant industry of world fame?

Between 1830 and 1860, a reform spirit swept the country. It is well described in *The History of American Government and Culture*. The reform spirit was a product of that new sense of democracy which had come with the move west of the Alleghenies. People who sensed that now, as never before, destiny lay in their own hands had the self-belief which gave them courage to attack the ills of society. In a mounting spirit of humanity, they started campaigns against ignorance, against the saloon, against slavery, injustice to women, child-labor, cruelty to animals, to the criminally insane. They worked for improved conditions for Poor Farms, for institutions for the deaf, blind and crippled. There were even movements against capital punishment which, in 1837, was abolished in the state of Maine.

Chicago, young as it was and busily engrossed in its so absorbing affairs, was moved by that spirit. In Chicago it grew large in the '50's and continued on with outstanding results.

But along with the revitalized, extended belief in democracy and the new warmhearted, conscientious humanity of spirit, there was the growing money lust. It was not limited to any one clique of men who settled here or settled there. It was throughout the country, a part of the nineteenth-century spirit. However, it showed up strongest in those places where the most money could be made and made the fastest. And Chicago was such a spot.

Chicago's story goes on with these forces at work. Individuals there were who rose to prominence in one way or another, giving an added push to this trend or that, yet the story of Chicago is not the story of these individuals so much as it is the story of the thought patterns of a period, the shared beliefs which worked within the people, a force now blind and now far-visioned, now greedy and now noble. These people reacted to the rapidly changing world about them in the light of what they believed, for the most part in common.

Chapter Seven

PULL OUT OF THE MUD



The mud was becoming too much

CHICAGO had its boosters, professional ones, you might call them, just to make a distinction between Chicagoans in general and that handful of leaders who got up early and stayed up late trying to figure out new ways to do the boosting. They were possessed with driving energy. In those days, the energy would have been called volcanic and not dynamic—dynamos hadn't been invented and man had to fall back on natural forces for his adjectives. William Bross was such a

man. "Deacon" Bross, they nicknamed him, and his fervor for Chicago was evangelical. There was no fault Chicago had but he could see some virtue in it and proclaim it loudly to the world. Long John Wentworth was another who boosted hard and steady and kept at it even when he was striding up and down the halls of Congress. Mayor Ogden was both booster and greeter. Anyone of importance in any field who visited Chicago was a guest in Ogden's house, and among those he entertained were Webster, Tilden, Van Buren, and Emerson. There were other Chicago boosters, just as devoted, just as fervent in their day and in days to follow, and Chicago's growth owes much to these men who plugged away, in good times and bad, spreading their faith across the land.

And it was faith. Today we have grown skeptical of boosters. We want to know what lies behind the words, whose interest is being served, and we are sharp to suspect that someone might be trying to fool us. But those Chicago boosters weren't trying to fool anybody. They *had* something in the growing city, something that would make money. They were certain of it. When they talked about "Chicago's manifest destiny," it was out of their own solid conviction that they spoke. And they loved the thing they were helping to create and which was growing there, right before their eyes. For Chicago they would put their hands in their own pockets and fork up—whether or not they saw immediate financial returns, though in the long run they knew they'd get it back, and most of them were making money hand over fist on this promotion or that.

The Chicago boosters were apparently quite innocent of any notion that modesty is a virtue or that facts speak for themselves. They weren't content with telling you how good a thing Chicago was or would be, they bawled it out and dinned it in your ears. They talked so loud they could be heard in all the cities round about, and other cities didn't like the noise. It drowned out their own. They were growing cities, too. They had their own progress to report—even

if it wasn't as spectacular as this loud-mouthed baby giant by the lake shore. Besides—and this hurt—the loud tooting on the horn was attracting the crowd, the drift was toward Chicago. The boosters were getting results.

It was vulgar. It was offensive. It was without dignity. That was what the people said in other cities. Yet even in Chicago there were some who felt the boosters went too far. After all, it must not be thought that Chicago lacked good manners! No, really, even if the boosters did get results, and a certain aggressiveness was in keeping with the hustle of a young and growing city . . . Not but what Chicago was a very fine city and unquestionably unique, and who would want to live any place else?

But boosting is a natural thing in a young city where you, your relatives, your friends, have played some part in the city's growth and you can look at the progress and take a creative satisfaction in work well done, hoping it may continue to the mutual benefit of the citizens. That feeling has been almost entirely lost in the older big cities where too many of the people have forgotten that once they were the builders and shapers. With the incoming thousands, that was already beginning to happen in Chicago. Many of the newcomers would hurry to their jobs, work long hours for low wages, come home tired and wonder wearily if they had actually arrived within that land of promise they had headed for. But, more than in most big cities, Chicago's booster spirit still lives on, retaining a quality handed down from those who threw their hearts into its first growth.

President James Polk vetoed a bill to improve the rivers and harbors of the Northwest. Chicago's indignant answer was given in the River and Harbor Convention which opened in Chicago, July 4, 1847. The convention had no immediate practical results, but it was boosting on a grand scale. Despite Chicago's plunging progress, there were still outsiders who had not seen the vision of Chicago's future magnitude, and

if they had been asked which town in Illinois was most likely to grow great they would have picked Galena.

But not after that convention. There were 3,000 delegates from eighteen of the twenty-nine states, and there were influential names among them. Horace Greeley of the *New York Tribune* was there, and Erastus Corning, President of the New York Central, and Thurlow Weed, Albany editor and a power in New York politics, besides notables from other states. The visitors were treated to a grand military parade with elaborate floats and with representations of every department, organization, society and enterprise the city could put forward, not to mention speeches—and it was a day for highfalutin oratory.

Lost in among the notables was a tall, lanky young lawyer, come upstate for the occasion. He had a few words to say in favor of local waterway improvements, his words quiet, drawled, "Nothing is so local as not to be of some general benefit. . . ." A few men remarked him and afterward, when his name came up, thought back, remembering the man, Abe Lincoln.

The visitors looked about them, saw the canal nearing completion, heard talk from Ogden about coming railroads, got an idea of the vigor and bustle in the place—and after that it was easier for Chicago to get financial backing from the East.

The war with Mexico was on. Two companies enlisted, but there was little interest. Many people thought the way young Lincoln did, saying it wasn't exactly a right war. Seemed too much like taking other people's land away from them. Besides, Texas would be a slave state. Northern states, Illinois among them, thought the fewer of those the better.

In those days, Lincoln was often in Chicago on business. His business didn't amount to much of anything. There were a lot of young lawyers knocking about, and he wasn't counted anybody in particular—except for story telling. He would

put up at the Tremont, and if the evening was fine, he'd drop into one of the chairs that stood out on the sidewalk in front of the hotel and start in telling yarns, and the way he told them was something that stayed in memory. People said there wasn't any end to the stories that fellow could tell, and he never told the same one twice. Better'n going to a show house to hear him talk.

In the year of '47, John B. Rice opened a permanent theater—the first. Three years later opera would be presented—a first. It was *La Sonnambula*. On the opening night fire broke out, destroying the theater. No one was hurt, and a man who had been seated in the orchestra left the theater declaring, "Best imitation of a fire I ever saw!" Rice rebuilt, of course.

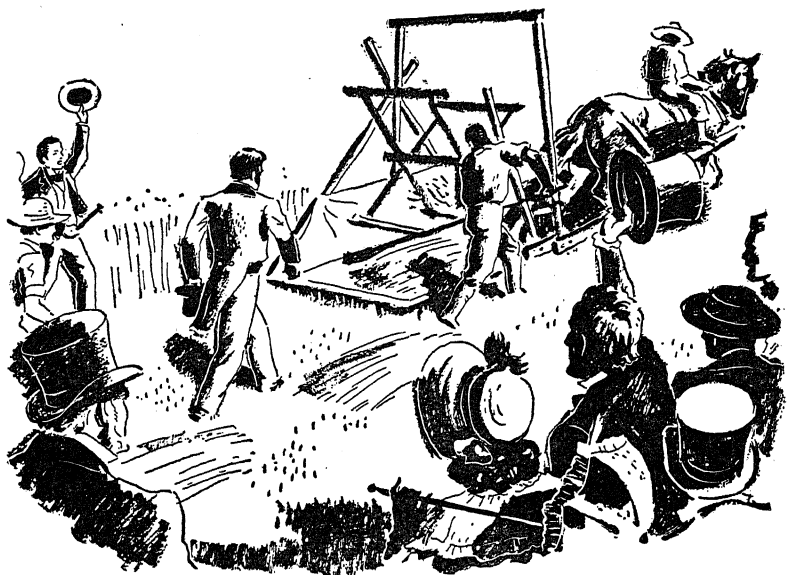
The humanitarian spirit was at work. The Chicago Retreat for the Insane was opened. Madmen wouldn't be thrown into jails any more. Donations of food and money were sent to the starving people of Ireland.

And enterprise was steadily at work, though some of those enterprises which grew big in Chicago brought benefits to so many millions that they had something of a humanitarian quality along with the tremendous profits. A newcomer, Cyrus Hall McCormick, arrived with an invention and a hundred dollars capital. Chicago men, Ogden among them, saw the value of the invention and put money into it. McCormick turned out harvesting machines, 700 the first year, 1,500 the second. And farming all over the country underwent a revolution.

1848—

The canal was opened! It had been slow digging and it had cost a lot, but there it was at last, the long-cherished dream come true. In the year of its opening, the canal earned \$80,000, and it did better the next. Two years after its opening, New Orleans' trade began to decline. Chicago was the growing port.

1848 was quite a year. The telegraph came in. The first



Mr. McCormick's invention

message received was from Detroit (she sent the same message to three cities, Chicago included). "WE HAIL YOU BY LIGHTNING AS FAIR SISTERS." To which Chicago's reply was, "MAY WE BE JOINED BY BONDS AS HOLY AS THOSE WHICH UNITE MAIDENS TO THE OBJECT OF THEIR LOVE BUT UNLIKE THEIR LOVE MAY OUR COURSE ALWAYS RUN SMOOTHLY."

And in the same year a locomotive went puffing out along the ten miles of track laid down for the Galena and Chicago Union Railway. It went at twenty miles an hour, and the mayor and his guests, riding in the open cars, held tight to their stovepipe hats.

This had been opposed, strongly. Chicago businessmen had declared a railroad would ruin Chicago's business. Why, if produce could be shipped by train, farmers would not come into town and spend their money there! Think of the loss to retail trade! And, although Ogden was behind the railroad enterprise and pushing hard with all his faith, the businessmen

would not permit the tracks inside the city limits, and it was to the farmers Ogden had to go to sell his stock. They listened, thought him shrewd and honest, and they bought. They would be rewarded with dividends that sent their boys to college and set them up in business.

Chicago businessmen began to think it over when, within a week, thirty loads of wheat were at the railroad terminal. They didn't have to do any more thinking on the subject when they saw that inside of a month the Galena and Chicago Union had a profit of \$2,000. The following year the monthly profit would be \$9,000, but by then anyone who had opposed railroads had forgotten all about that. Railroads! Why, Chicago could do business *wholesale*. Chicago was the center of north and south water traffic and east and west land traffic. Chicago could become the hub of the continent. It might, why, sure it might—it might become the greatest railroad center in the country—in the world!

The boom was on again, full blast, land values up and population vaulting.

The little engine (which arrived from the East lashed to the deck of a boat) got a name when the second one arrived and it was necessary, when you were talking railroads over the long cigars, to make plain *which* locomotive you were speaking of. They called it *The Pioneer* and painted its proud name on its side, and the picture of it was seen by many. Even today that picture has a certain charm. It's such a simple, honest little engine, and it looks like something you might have thought up yourself.

There had been railroading in the state before this, starting back in '38 with the state-owned venture that got as far as laying down a twenty-four-mile track before the state debt grew too heavy to push on with it. Those early choo-choo rides were what might come under the head of an experience or a calamity. The engines were wood-burning, and they required a lot of water. Gentlemen passengers were frequently involved in the labor of chopping wood or fetching

water, and the refilling and refueling places along the run were numerous! Steel rails had not yet been invented, thin strips of iron were used. Research by the Federal Writers' Project turned up some facts that no doubt those early pioneers in railroading glossed over in that day. It seems those iron rails had a nasty way of coming unspiked and curling up into "snakeheads" which could pierce and rip the wooden floorboards of the car. Worse still, the farmers didn't always show respect for the contraption. Iron was scarce and a farmer, once he let his thoughts wander, could think up a lot of uses for a nice long strip of iron. They made good sled-runners, for one thing. That non-co-operative, not to say downright thieving, trick of just hauling off a bit of track for private use led to a good deal of earnest cussing on the part of railroad men, for it caused wrecks if the engineer didn't keep his eyes open and look ahead to see if the track was still there, and most people were fidgety enough about riding on the railroad without *that* hazard being added. But it seems trouble didn't stop there. Sometimes an engine which had started out on a run, puffing proudly, would know some inner defeat, its mechanism broken down, and there would be an inglorious return, the whole train hauled back home by a team of horses.

But of course now that Chicago had gone in for railroad-ing, all of that would soon be history! Money and enterprise were behind the development, and progress would be steady with Chicago contributing much to the industry. The first steel rails rolled in the country would come out of the Chicago Rolling Mills. There the first sleeping cars would be conceived, and there refrigeration cars for the shipment of beef would be perfected. And Ogden would keep on building railroads down to that proud day when, as President of the Union Pacific, he would drive the final, golden nail uniting the west coast with the east.

Government came in on the backing, too, with its grant to Illinois of over 2,500,000 acres of land in 1850 for the con-

struction of a central railroad. Some of the government land grants to the railroad builders all over the country loomed so large that later on, when people began to ask questions, it wasn't easy to find any answer that would even sound nice. When you sat down with a map of the United States and looked at the land areas the railroads got, it just amounted to a swipe, and there's no reason to find a softer word. But in those days the questions weren't asked. People wanted railroads; the men who built them were their benefactors, and anyhow, there was a lot of land in the country that wasn't being used.

Out of that industry would come another—the mining of coal. To feed those engines something more than kindling was needed. Illinois was going to wake up to its vast coal deposits.

With the coming of railroads the industrial age had taken its grip on the country, and nowhere was the transition from an agricultural civilization to an industrial one more rapid or violent than in Illinois. Chicago was soon to feel the change in dark, grim days of tragedy and strife which no one then foresaw.

After the Galena and Chicago Union, the next railroad to come in was the Illinois Central in 1851. 1852 saw the lines of the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern, and of the Michigan Central come in, and Chicago was connected with the East by rail. Many of those railroad lines were laid down along Indian trails, like the one that curved around the bottom of the lake, and the one that followed the old Sauk trail to the west.

The early engines had "cowcatchers," and those weren't there for ornament. One hour before train time section hands cleared the tracks of ambling cows, but even so a stray mooley could cause anguish to herself and others. Passenger trains were soon averaging thirty miles an hour, and in '53 there was a bad wreck at Grand Crossing when the Illinois Central and the Michigan Southern trains smashed into each other.

Eighteen passengers were killed and forty hurt. People were shocked, as they always are by a dramatic catastrophe, and indignant tirades against the dangerous speed were voiced. There would be more wrecks and more speed, but also more safety devices perfected and the hazards cut down, wrecks diminishing in number. Speed was what the people wanted and the railroads could give it to them.

Yes, Chicagoans were shocked when eighteen people met death in a wreck. . . . In the same year they had planned a park "with lake and rustic bridge and gliding swans," they had seen Northwestern University open its doors to students, they had chartered the Chicago University, they had listened to Adelina Patti and to Ole Bull, they had strolled down to the river to see the boats that plied daily to Milwaukee, and they had been so pleased about the railroads—and now here was this frightful accident.

And yet. . . .

In 1848, cholera claimed one in thirty-six of the Chicago population. On August 1 that year thirty deaths were reported in one day. In 1852, cholera caused 630 deaths. In 1854, cholera would claim 1,020 victims. Cholera came annually, yet tuberculosis, working steadily, claimed more.

Evidence of progress was on every hand. Men were dazzled by it. Fortunes were being made and fine things were being done . . .

And the people went on dying from disease.

Why? Was it ignorance?

It was. If the people of Chicago had known what ailed them, something would have been done about it in a hurry. They were not heartless. They had the will to alleviate suffering. They had instituted medical societies, medical schools, a Board of Health, a city hospital. But remember, medical science was not then what it is today. Even among the medical profession there was scant understanding of the causes of disease. Chicago was dirty. The streets and alleys were mud,

and they were littered. Hogs had been denied the freedom of the streets since '43, but livestock still drove along the principal thoroughfares, and rats overran the place. Until '55 Chicago had no plan for sewage disposal, and then the plan was a bad one, for it drained sewage into the river, which in turn drained into the lake. The drinking water was unclean.

Yes, they were ignorant, a dreadful ignorance it now seems to us, starting up the ugly question whether, if health had been considered a paying financial venture, endowed research on a large scale could not have routed the costly ignorance more speedily.

The question may be justifiable, since profit is a great incentive in a civilization where money is the recognized symbol of success and money-making the dominant, absorbing interest to the largest number of the citizens, and health, though a wanted factor for the good name of any city, would not pay back what might be called exciting dividends. But the question casts a slur which does not seem deserved. It was not as though the leading citizens knew what was wrong and closed their eyes to their duty, they just didn't know what was the matter. The fault, if you like, lay with the system into which they had entered, not seeing its flaws. For the most part they were men with a sense of decency and honor; they had a pride in the city and an affection for it which, in all the rush of new growth, somehow had not extended far enough to keep the city clean. Ignorance can be criminal—without criminal intentions.

But at that, the mud was becoming too much for them. Something would have to be done about it. Carts and carriages would be mired. Ladies, swinging a graceful hand to the rear to gather up their full skirts, would adventure forth at a crossing, walking tiptoe, only to sink deeply, losing a slipper, crying out for rescue. The jests no longer brought a laugh—not even the favorite one about the man who, seeing a hat lying in the mud, bent down to pick it up and on lifting

the hat saw a man's face staring up at him. "Say, stranger, you're stuck in the mud! Can I give you a hand to pull you out?" "Oh, no, thanks," the face replied, "I'm riding a good horse. He's got me out of worse spots."

And some of the buildings were actually going down, sinking slowly by their own weight into the mire. The new Tremont Hotel, built of brick, four stories high, which had replaced the old one when it burned down, was on the way to China.

They had tried planking the streets in '49, but that had proved a failure. Boards would teeter and come up and strike you in the face. Cobblestones were even more disappointing. They sank heavily into the ooze and disappeared. After some prolonged and worrisome speculation, a bold idea was hit upon—nothing for it but to raise the level of the streets, all of them! Just hoist up the land, make it higher so it would drain off properly. Cover up the slews. Pile on more earth. Sure, that would mean lifting the whole city, but what of it?—Chicago had to have good streets, didn't she?

It was a crazy-looking city while that task went on, and it lasted for ten years. As the level of the streets rose, what had been first floors became basements. Elevated wooden sidewalks had stairs descending at the end of each block and rising where the next block began. One Chicago lady who had been visiting in England returned with an enthusiasm for the fine pastime of walking, and having publicly declared herself, a cartoon of the day shows her busily engaged in climbing and descending endless flights of stairs. It was even said that Chicagoans could no longer walk on a level stretch. When they found themselves out strolling in another city, they would have to turn into a building every now and again and run up to the second floor and down again to get back into the swing of a stroll.

The downward travel of the Tremont was put to an end when a bright young stranger turned up in town and presented a plan for hoisting it. His plan was accepted, the hotel

was raised, and George M. Pullman had begun his career in Chicago.

George P. A. Healy was painting portraits around that time, and he didn't belong to that earlier school of American portrait painters who, adapting themselves to frontier conditions, evolved a novel technique. Maybe you have wondered how it was that some old families possess portraits by one early artist or another, for one naturally associates sitting for a portrait with leisure and means, and many of those frontier families lacked both. Well, it seems that in those days it wasn't unusual for a portrait painter to travel the roads, ringing doorbells as he went, and he arrived with the picture all painted—background, figure, even details of costume—only the face a blank and waiting to be painted in. So really it wasn't necessary to sacrifice much time to art, the busy people could find time to "sit."

A custom that dates still further back in the annals of American art is that of the painter who arrived at your door with a finished portrait, having for a subject a young child or an elderly person, and the portrait would be purchased by the family that had suffered a recent loss. Resemblance or none, the portrait came into the home as a cherished reminder of the dear departed, whether it was sweet little Lucy whom the angels had taken or dear Papa or Mama, lost but ne'er to be forgotten.

But although Chicago held to its pattern of both enterprise and culture, shipping its first cargo of grain to Liverpool that year of '55, and opening its first high school, grim forces were at work.

In '55 the melting pot sputtered and boiled over, and there was an ugly bit of a blaze.

The hordes of immigrants who had poured into the country had not all been easily assimilated. It was quite all right with the native stock when the "furriners" took hard work at digging canals and laying railroad tracks. A lot of hands were

needed for that backbreaking, sweltering labor out under the hot sun of summer, and no one begrudged it to them. But when some of them went nosing around for *good* jobs—well, they might get in someone else's way, and why shouldn't the good jobs go to those who had been born and brought up in the country?

That dog-in-the-manger attitude had crept in. Not everywhere of course, thank goodness, but enough to make itself felt. The natives who voiced it wanted special privilege. They weren't big enough to uphold fair play for all and let the best man win, wherever he might come from. They forgot that the very names in history which every American child is taught to respect are names of immigrants or sons of immigrants. They forgot about the American plan—equal opportunity to all.

Out of that ill humor came the "Know-Nothing" or Nativist movement which visited persecution and cruelty, both large and petty, on the newcomers.

In Chicago, the blaze occurred when a law was passed raising the license fee of the saloons, for that would result in closing the smaller ones, frequented by the "furriners." Chicago had a large number of German-born immigrants who had come to America in revolt against the tyranny that had arisen in their native land. Many of them were intelligent, freedom-respecting people. Along with them were a number of German-born Jews, who in '43, fled persecution, seeking refuge in the land of the free and Chicago in particular. To the German-born, the saloon was something more than a place to drink. It was a beer garden, a place where there would be music, and one could take the family and sit through the quiet of a Sunday afternoon enjoying the melodies and pleasant discussion with friends and neighbors.

The frequenters of the beer gardens—and these included some Scandinavians as well—protested the law. They met together on street corners and made indignant speeches. Some of the Irish listened in, saw the cause of justice in a jam, and

joined in the protest. And then the mayor—there was reason to believe he acted under pressure of “Know-Nothingism—” dug up an old Sunday closing law, slapped it on the beer gardens and not on the larger, native-owned saloons. Sunday, in the hard-working city of the new world, was, of course, the only day when an interlude of leisurely enjoyment could be indulged.

The result was the “beer-garden riot.” Outraged, the protesters marched, armed. They came against the police, and there was a free-for-all in which guns, fists and clubs were used, and a man was killed on each side.

It was soon over, and when Chicago cooled off, the native stock was ashamed of the affair. True, you couldn’t have riots and the police had done their duty, but the “furriners” had been picked on, and that wasn’t right.

The next mayor didn’t listen to the Know-Nothings.

Grimmer still, crime had grown in the city. Gamblers, confidence men, “bunco-ropers” were thriving. Pickpockets did a profitable business. Burglaries and street hold-ups occurred in daylight, and gun play was frequent and murderous. Down on “the Sands” by the river there was a bad spot. Out of that shambles of flimsy, disreputable wooden shacks came sounds of brawling and drunkenness all through the night. Into the young, rich city had come roughs and bad men off the river boats. Off the freight cars in the yards dropped men who were wanted in other towns.

And Chicago was breeding her own criminals. There were disappointed men in Chicago, men who had been attracted by the golden promise and who had come seeking it—and found instead a drudging job at fifty cents a day and no glimmer of a prospect of advancement. Some of them were country lads whom the city judged as slow, dull-witted. There were others who may have been nimble-witted enough but who were wanting that knack, that bit of luck, the advantage of an education in an eastern college, the helping hand of a friend, that

inner force of energy and confidence—whatever it was that was needed to do the trick in this humming competitive city, now caught up in the new industrialism.

And there were others who had come a long way, hope shining in their eyes, only to find strange barriers raised against them. These were immigrants off the land in the old country, wanting a square of land in the new. They encountered baffling difficulties when it came to fulfilling requirements for homesteading, difficulties some of them could not surmount, and they turned back from the beautiful lands that they would have known how to nurture, taking employment in the crowded city in some new industry they did not love and for which they had no skill. Slums crept in, along the canal, along the railroad tracks. Families lived crowded together in rickety frame houses. Men began to grumble, native-born and foreign-born alike. Opportunity for all! Where was it?

A national panic came in '57, and then even fifty cents a day would have looked good to a man in the slums with a family to support. One hundred and seventeen business houses failed. Twenty thousand faced starvation.

The leading citizens did about everything they could think of to relieve the suffering and improve conditions. Why, no one wanted anybody to *starve*! The Chicago Relief and Aid Society was organized to help the poor. As to crime—well, Long John Wentworth, back from Congress, was then mayor, and he went after the vice dens on “the Sands” and cleared them out by the simple process of having them burned down, and some people said that was the right thing to do, though others thought it a disgraceful procedure. But somehow, that didn't put an end to crime. . . .

Chicago lumbered along, having her troubles and not knowing how to solve them, but hoping they would be brief. And the business depression was. Chicago pulled out of it more quickly than other cities. Soon Chicago had a new proud string of “firsts”—the blast furnace on the north side of the river—the Art Exposition—the horse-drawn street cars—the

Y.M.C.A.—the United Hebrew Relief Association—the Home for the Friendless—the Academy of Science—the Mendelssohn Society—the paving on Clark Street—all firsts. And besides that, there was McVickers' new theater, seating 2,500, while the meat business, the lumber, and the grain were all picking up strong.

And yet. . . .

Chicago's walk is no longer quite so queenly. Her head held high, she casts an occasional anxious glance about her. Something of that happy virgin confidence is gone. Her pride remains, but a defensive note has crept into it. She is like a beautiful lady who cannot shake off a mocking, trailing rabble of children who now and again throw stones at her. And they are her own.

Chapter Eight

OUT OF THE PEOPLE



Illinois raised more soldiers than any other state

CHICAGO had something to think about besides its own engrossing affairs . . .

You remember how the slavery question spread over the land, entered into every home, became a national issue of swelling importance; how even in the North, where Abolitionist feeling was at a ferment, there was divided opinion; and how the tension grew as each new state joined the Union—would it be slave or free, would the balance be maintained?

And how this compromise or that was tried—and affairs grew worse?

To the American people, barring relatively small special interests in the North and South, the questions that arose were moral ones—what was right or wrong? Was it right for a man to own a slave? Was it right to take a man's property—such as slaves—away from him? Was it right for the national government to interfere with state governments and tell them how to run their affairs? Was it right for the southern states to threaten to secede from the Union? The country hummed with talk, and the foreboding deepened that more than talk would come out of this.

And you remember how the figure of a man arose, slowly, like a tall man getting up from a chair where he had sat hunched, getting bigger, as he rose, unfolding, growing taller, lankier, stretching to full height? And you remember how this common man, out of the people, one of them, said simple, earnest things he believed were true, based on that American plan the founding fathers had worked out, and how, the way he put it, the truth came home afresh, took on new energy, new beauty, the age-long dream of burdened man, hard-striving after liberty and justice, brought close again?

Lincoln was bred out of that awakened sense of democracy which had come with the westward expansion. He was its voice. And in him was that large compassionate humanity that was in keeping with the reform movements of the period. But of that other compelling nineteenth century force—money lust—he had none. It wasn't in him.

Nor did the new industrialism, springing up about him, work any change on this man out of a mud-floored log cabin. He rode on trains, he used the telegraph, he came in time to talk with men who had the power of corporations at their back and dickered in more than one tremendous upstart enterprise, and yet he remained countrified, slow-moving, deliberate in thought, deep-brooding, and his simplicity was

ingrained. He milked his own cow, hitched up his own horse, saw nothing odd in riding in a caboose after he had been nominated for the presidency. He had the time to loaf with neighbors, sit around the country store and swap jokes, listen to someone's troubles, take time off to help a friend. He said, "Maybe I'll amount to something someday. It won't be in the way of piling up a lot of money . . ." Once, according to his great biographer, Carl Sandburg, Lincoln was passing by a pretentious mansion, "he remarked that for a man to live in a house like that had an effect on his character. 'If he's at all sensitive, he'll feel it.' "

No, he had no money lust, no driving, competitive hustle, no itch for power. Understanding was the thing he sought—understanding about life and death and God and man and justice, and a fair, good way of living for all men.

If he had been tossed into the fast, sharp, hustling business world and told he must make good according to the money standard of success, it is easy to picture the failure that he might have been.

And yet—

How small the big names seem beside that man-size, noble figure—Ogden, Pullman, Armour, McCormick and the rest, each and every one deserving of some praise for what they wrought, but pigmies, not giants, when once the image of Abe Lincoln fills the eye!

A common man? Not in the sense of commonplace. His thought soared up. The man within him strove mightily for growth to full, individual stature, but his pity and his love, his intuition and his sense, showed him how the veins of human nature ran through every man, linking them all, the obscure and the known, the articulate and the inarticulate, and he felt the stuff within him that he held in common with all others and was moved by it.

Sandburg says, "Sprinkled through the speeches of Lincoln, as published, were stubby, homely words that reached

out and made plain, quiet people feel that perhaps behind them was a heart that could understand them—the People—the listeners.”

Of the people, yes. But not by that content to be a will-less lump of flesh relying on mass power alone to fight his battles and think out his decisions. Of that torpid, complacent flow of mass compliance to a leader's will that has, in some instances, been pleased to call itself “the People” he had dismay. Once, with rare scorn, he upbraided an audience who had gathered to hear him speak. “Plainly, you stand ready saddled, bridled, and harnessed, and waiting to be driven.”

He said things plain, “As I would not be a *slave*, so I would not be a *master*. That expresses my idea of democracy. . . .”

Chicago knew him to be something more than a second- or third-rate lawyer by this time. He had served a term in Washington as Congressman. He was now running against Stephen A. Douglas for the Senate. In the political life of the nation, every contest which arose centered about the all-absorbing and uneasy question of slavery. In 1858, Douglas came out on the balcony of the Tremont House in Chicago and expressed his views to a large crowd. The next night saw Lincoln on the same balcony giving his opinions. It was in the Tremont House that Lincoln wrote the challenge to Douglas which resulted in the Lincoln and Douglas debates which ranged over the land of Illinois, attracting enormous crowds and the attention of the nation. Out of that contest Lincoln emerged, suddenly famous, while Douglas, though he won the senatorial contest, had been forced into admissions which damaged him as a figure of national importance. Lincoln was voicing the growing feeling of the people. He was saying the things so many of them felt and wanted said, yet scarcely knew, in the turmoil of that hour, until the clear, reasoned flow of his thought clarified their own. Often poignant with a depth of age-old, sorrowful longing after noble, rightful ways, often homely with an earthy folk-wit

that made laughter come like an illuminating flash of light, he spoke simply without that flowery grandeur of the orator and was profoundly moving.

Joseph Medill, editor and part owner of *The Chicago Tribune*, saw presidential timber in the man and proclaimed it through his paper. Soon the tall, strong, gangling figure was a frequent caller on Medill, the long legs stretched out and resting quite at home upon the editor's desk. The *Tribune* stood by Lincoln stanchly in those days and in the darker ones to come, while *The Chicago Times* could pour out nothing but abusive ridicule upon the man from first to last—all but the obituary. Out of the heaving, oppressive uncertainty of the future, a new political party had emerged, the Republican. It would replace the Whig and draw in many from the Democratic ranks. The *Tribune* backed the new party and Lincoln along with it.

Illinois, that representative state, was, like the country, divided in opinion. The southern part, settled when the Ohio waterway was the westward route, had brought in folk from the southern states. The northern part, owing its increase in population to those who came via the Erie Canal, had the New Englanders in large proportion. Some southerners had settled in Chicago—McCormick was a Virginia man. But though the feeling was nowhere one of unanimity, Chicago, with more Yankees in the population, was for the North. The loyalty of birth and antecedents was often the deciding factor in a man's opinions, though Lincoln himself, Illinois raised, was Kentucky born.

Looking back on it afresh, you can feel the war coming on inevitably as you perceive the appeasement tactics that were used. A good many important people of the North seemed ready to surrender almost every principle in order to avoid bloodshed. Concession after concession was granted to the South, with the result that, as Fiske's *History* puts it, "their policy became aggressive to the point of recklessness, and secession was already in the air back in 1856. But while this

policy went on, the Abolitionists, that non-political group, continued to cry out for action stronger than any political party wanted to avow, and continually harassed the southerners."

The debates concluded, Lincoln went back to his law practice knowing the taste of defeat. Douglas was in the Senate. He had won out. And as Lincoln drove his horse and buggy along the black, muddy roads of Illinois, covering again the territory he had covered for so long as a circuit lawyer, stopping to talk with friends or strangers at one place or another, the Lincoln stories grew; of a grave, tender man with a sad face; of a man who could tell jokes that would make "the cat die laughing." But soon he would be called away. A bigger job was waiting for him—the biggest job of all.

In 1860, a large wooden building was erected in Chicago on the site of the old Sauganash Tavern where once Mark Beaubien had played his fiddle and entertained his buckskin-clad, raccoon-capped guests. To that building, called the Wigwam, came the five hundred delegates for the Republican Convention of 1860, and into the city's 112,000 population poured 40,000 visitors.

Chicago had fifteen railroads now and one hundred and fifty trains a day. Iron bridges crossed the river at Rush Street and at Van Buren. Tall grain elevators lined the wharves which rimmed the river, and four miles to the south a vast "Bovine City" spread—the new stockyards. Ministers were declaring, "Here, in Chicago, we have fifty-six churches open on Sunday, during the forenoon and evening; but at the same time there are no less than eighty ballrooms, in each of which a band plays from morning till midnight, and waltzing goes on without intermission. In addition to these festivities, we have two theaters, each with its performers in tights and very short garments. Saloons have their front doors closed by proclamation, but do a thriving business through the side entrance."

The good people might denounce the theaters, but there

were those who praised them, saying that it was to the credit of the theaters, where *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was then playing, that moral indignation had been aroused. They had done more than any other force to bring the humanitarian issue home to many.

At the convention, Lincoln's name would be put forward as presidential nominee. That and more, a determined group of Illinoisans had decided. But Seward was the favorite, and Lincoln's chance looked slight. Lincoln did not attend. Once begun, the Lincoln men threw all their energy into the task and all their wits, working unceasingly upon the delegates. It was in vain that Lincoln wired to them, "I authorize no bargains and will be bound by none," and "Make no contracts that will bind me." They held open the political grab-bag, offering tempting appointments for this or that government office to draw in the wavering states, and the conferences went on all night in the crowded hotel rooms, first one delegate pinned down and then another. Every trick of politics they knew they played, and some were cunning. When delegates poured into the convention hall they found the seating artfully arranged, the strong block of Seward men broken up, the doubtful states surrounded by the Lincoln boys. And on the final day, they found there was no room for the Seward clique, the Lincoln rooters filled the seats.

The tumult of that convention was historic. Norman B. Judd, then a railroad attorney, was a Lincoln man, and he saw to it that the railroads gave excursion rates to any man in Illinois who wanted to join in the shouting in Chicago. Sandburg tells us, "Men illuminated with moral fire . . . yelled, pranced and cut capers and vociferated for Lincoln . . . This immense mob, the like of which had not heretofore been seen or approximated in the assemblages of American politics was a factor; in what degree it influenced the convention in any view, decision, or emotional state, nobody could tell; it was an intangible. The air was charged somewhat as it was many years previous at the inauguration of

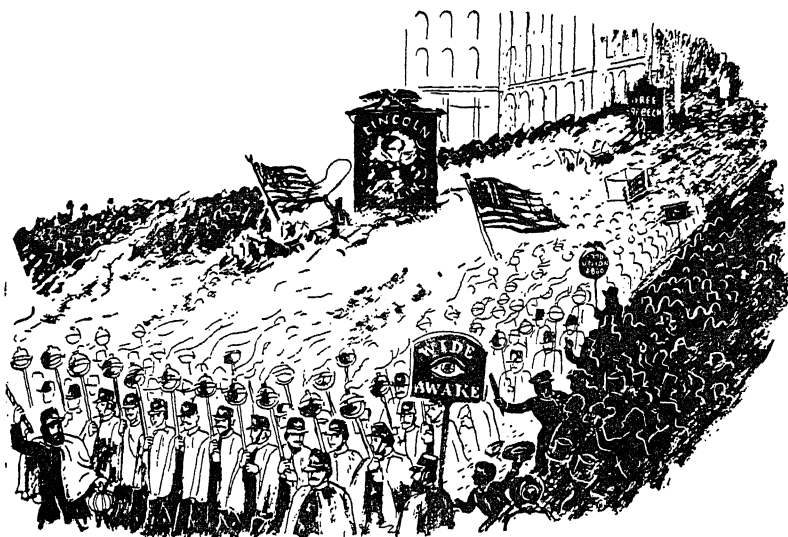
Andrew Jackson, where trappers and hunters traveled hundreds of miles and watched with guns and knives ready to see their hero inaugurated, implying that some revolution or deep social or political change was in the making."

The Wigwam had seats for 10,000 and standing room for 4,000, but there is no knowing how many of the thousands who filled the streets around it managed to press inside. As Lincoln gained headway in the nomination the din increased. A reporter, trying to describe the uproar, said, "I thought the Seward yell could not be surpassed, but the Lincoln boys were clearly ahead, and feeling their victory, they gave a concentrated shriek and stamping that made every plank and pillar in the building quiver . . . Imagine all the hogs ever slaughtered . . . giving their death squeals together and a score of big steam whistles going . . ." Another man said, "The wild yell made vesper breathings of all that had preceded. A thousand steam whistles, ten acres of hotel gongs, a tribe of Comanches, might have mingled in the scene unnoticed."

The long-slumbering Demos were aroused. Up to the surface came that gigantic subterranean flow of energy, erupting. Their man was in. Lincoln was elected.

Celebration continued through that day and night and into the next with the uproar of guns booming, boat whistles, factory whistles, train whistles and church bells going on while men said, "Thank God!" or "Have another drink!" and embraced and laughed and wept, the panic excitement of that triumph slow to reach exhaustion. Abe! Honest Abe! The fellow who used to split the fence rails down in Illinois! Why, I heard him when—Sure, that's the joke he told—you oughta heard the solemn way—six-foot-four and as strong as a bear-cat!—pick up a little kitten in his hand, soft and delicate as a —"A house divided"—those are Jesus' words—well, Abe said 'em—he said 'em, too—

Through Chicago's streets by night the flaring torchlight processions wound, flaming pitch barrels at their head, swing-



By night the flaring processions wound . . .

ing lanterns hung on the long fence rails that had become a symbol of the "rail-splitter" candidate. These men wore white oilcloth capes to guard against the winging sparks, and the flame light gleamed and swung on the shiny capes of the marching, singing men, and great black shadows danced along the streets, dodging the roving brightness. These men were the "Wide-Awakes," and soon the idea spread to other towns, and in far-off states their song was sung:

"Old Abe Lincoln came out of the wilderness,
Out of the wilderness,
Out of the wilderness,
Old Abe Lincoln came out of the wilderness,
Down in Illinois!"

And when the news came of Lincoln's election, Douglas said grimly, "There won't be a tar barrel left in Illinois to-night."

Lincoln came up to Chicago for the reception held at the

Tremont and then went back home. In the plain, tidy little house at Springfield, he looked ahead at the gigantic task which waited him, contemplating it with a brooding, sober understanding of how momentous would be the decisions he would be called upon to make. The passions of men, good and bad, had been loosed. Loyalties and hates boiled in the cauldron. Bloodletting had been called for in the North and in the South.

John Brown's ghost was walking over the land.

There was no decision to be made after the guns went off at Sumter. The war had begun.

In his first message to Congress, Lincoln said, "And this issues embraces more than the fate of these United States. It presents to the whole family of men the question whether a constitutional republic or democracy—a government of the people, by the same people—can or cannot sustain its territorial integrity against its own foes."

He said again at Gettysburg:

"—whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure—"

He saw the struggle in its largest sense as the struggle for the continuation and survival of democracy. To him, the preservation of the Union and of democracy were one. For that struggle, dark and bitter as it was, he called for troops.

Two days after that call, General H. K. Swift, Chicago banker, was on his way south with 860 men, four six-pounders and forty-six horses. Within three weeks thirty-nine companies enlisted. The Irish Brigade was the first regiment to be mustered in Illinois. The Irish had been of Douglas' party politically, but now under Colonel Mulligan, they responded to the slogan, "For the honor of the Old Land, Rally! Rally! for the defense of the New!" As for the state, by July, four times as many men volunteered as could be accepted. Impatient, many lads rushed off to near-by states

to volunteer. The Jews of Chicago raised and armed a company. Out of 15,000 soldiers, only fifty-eight were conscripts. Chicago gave largely, both men and money. Money was given by the banks, and it was raised by fairs. These "sanitary fairs" introduced in Chicago, were soon organized in other states.

And there was another way Chicago helped. In '61, Lincoln's Secretary of War said, "Without McCormick's invention, I feel the North could not win and that the Union would be dismembered." Those reapers, coming out now by the thousands, not only did the work of absent men but far surpassed the abundant slave labor of the South.

In proportion to her population, Illinois raised more soldiers for the Northern cause than any other state. And Chicago, which back in 1830, had contained but one-fifth of the state's population, now contained one-half.

Civil War—the most awful kind of war a country can know, brother against brother—was taking the young men, the sons, the husbands, the fathers, but in through that tragedy people with uplifted faces sang,

—"as He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free."

In Chicago, George F. Root wrote *The Battle Cry of Freedom* in those early days of '61, and it was sung at a large gathering of people on the day that it was written. News of battles would soon arrive, and then the lists of dead and missing. Colonel Elmer E. Ellsworth of Chicago would be the first man to die in that war. Colonel James A. Mulligan would die with a heroic last line, "Lay me down and save the flag."

. . . And back in Chicago a lady would ride alone in her spacious barouche, the fragile, frilly, doll-size parasol held above a pale, musing face, the India shawl, the billowing hoop skirt. A woman who didn't wear hoops, but only an apron over her drab, drooping skirts, rising early to face a day of

toil, would stand a moment looking at the dinner pail that had been put up on the shelf. Four years of human suffering . . . And no one would feel the multiple weight of that great burden more than the lonely, sad-faced, homely man in Washington.

Sometimes they wrote to him, "Dear Mr. Lincoln . . ." wanting news, help, a boy here, a man there . . . He answered them. He understood. They knew he did.

Not all of them, of course. No great man who ever roused the people's love was spared their hate. It broke out now, venomous and filthy, murderous in fury, as though so great a love must have a balance. Traitors got a new name in that war—Copperheads. And there were spots throughout the North where "secesh" feeling bred a nest of them. Not all who were against the war went so far as to be treasonable in their actions. With most it stopped at talk, though that was pretty strong where the Anti-War Democrats would gather.

That war, in itself, is a great wrong, no one who thinks twice will deny, but that it still remains an unsolved problem, all must admit, and until we do solve that problem—which we surely can—wars must be fought for principles which cannot be deserted. That, however, is a point which in every war some men and women will fail to realize.

But in one thing, the South miscalculated. Many a Northerner who appeared to be on their side before the war broke out had only seemed so through an anxiety to avert war. Douglas was such a man. Now that war had come, he rushed frantically about the state, urging full support for the Union cause, and wore himself out in the task. And there were many like him who, once war came, knew where their allegiance lay. The South did not have as many friends as she had counted on.

But Chicago had her troubles, especially when Camp Doug-

las, located at 34th Street and Cottage Grove Avenue, housed 10,000 captured Confederate soldiers behind a thin wood paling. It was not that merely now and again two or three of the prisoners would pry their way out and escape which alarmed Chicagoans, it was the fear of a monstrous "jail-break" which might be organized by Copperheads to start an insurrection at Chicago. This fear grew large when the Anti-War Democrats held their convention at Chicago in '64. Vallandigham, up from Ohio, already infamous for his attacks on Lincoln and the cause, was there, stopping at the Sherman House, and rumor spread that now would be the time when the prisoners would be loosed. In consternation, Chicago appealed for troops. They came, the 109th Pennsylvania Infantry, something less than a thousand men. But nothing happened, and afterward the scare seemed silly. Long John Wentworth challenged Vallandigham to a debate and worsted him, and Chicago felt relieved.

More dangerous, for it was a threat to liberty, was the suppression clapped down on *The Chicago Times*. That paper had blasted away at Lincoln and the Union cause with a maddening persistence, until, in a hotheaded moment, General Ambrose E. Burnside (of the side-whiskers) ordered its suppression, and soldiers from Camp Douglas seized the plant. At that, Chicago was in a commotion, some for and some against. Mobs filled the streets, and the smell of blood was in the air. But within three days word came from Lincoln to lift the ban. Free speech won out, and *The Chicago Times* could go on saying what it liked.

In '62, Chicagoans had the killer there before their eyes.

They gave him their rapt attention and applause. John Wilkes Booth was a distinguished actor of a distinguished acting family. The Booths had often played Chicago and down through Illinois. Lincoln had seen them, liked them. Who that loved the best the theater had to offer in the

great tragedies of Shakespeare did not respect, admire the Booths? And so in Chicago they clapped their hands and gave their praise to this one . . .

1865, April 9th—

It was over! Lee had surrendered at Appomattox! And to an Illinois man, too—Grant, out of Galena, used to clerk in a store there! Yes, over, God be praised, over . . . The Union saved, a victory to cherish, and peace in which the deep joy could be relished in thankfulness. The boys would be coming home, home safe, to stay. What good times there would be now, anxiety and dread and dolor lifted from the land, gay times, celebrations! Why, joy had been a stranger for a long, long time! Throw open the door to Joy! Tell her to walk right in! Good times, gay times, everybody laughing, happy . . . Crosby's new Opera House, hurrying completion, announced the opening for the 17th—

That opening was postponed.

April 14th Lincoln was assassinated.

Lincoln had this greatness in him—

He could speak for all time.

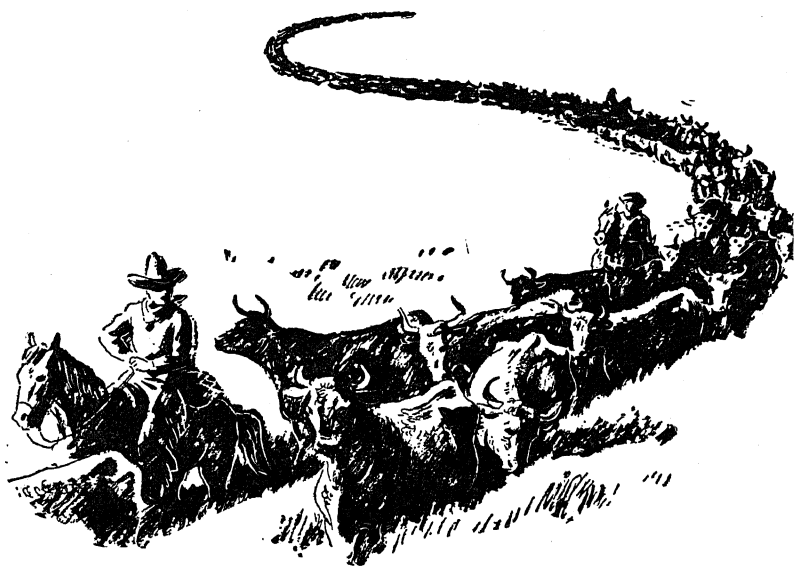
No, he isn't dated. Most of us haven't begun to catch up with him yet. If we had, we'd be better fitted to tussle with the world problems which are going to keep piling in upon us from now on. It might not be a bad idea in offering up a prayer for these United States right now if some part of it would be—

Lincoln, be with us now.

The eternal truth of democratic belief that this man voiced with such humanity has made of him a symbol to revere with all the love we have for justice and fair dealing and the rights of man.

Chapter Nine

THROUGH HELL AND HIGH WATER



The famous cattle drives began

ILLINOIS, all told, had lost 5,857 killed in action, 3,051 dead of wounds, 19,034 dead of disease—figures which give us an idea of the state of medicine in those days.

Chicago mourned and honored her dead. In '64, on the site of an old graveyard, Lincoln Park was dedicated. In '67, Memorial Day was first observed.

Though there would be homes long sorrow-haunted, the war had brought no blight upon the city. Its geographical position had again favored it. Chicago was far enough away

from the area of war to be spared the danger of cavalry raids, yet by rail it had been close enough to carry on transportation of troops, munitions and produce. War had brought rapid advances to all Chicago's major industries. Enterprise and invention were in full swing. There were even some faint stirrings of a social progress in the attempts of workmen to unite for their own betterment.

Chicago's leadership in the stockyard industry was becoming rapidly more outstanding. Pioneer dealers had been scattered here and there about the city, wherever they had chanced to start up, but in '64 they combined to build, with railroad co-operation, the Union Stockyard, thus centering the industry and making delivery of livestock by rail a more efficient procedure. On Halsted Street down at the southwest, outside of what were then the city limits, 345 acres of swampy land were converted for this business which would, in very short years, dominate world markets.

Just what this enterprise meant to the country and to the world is hard to realize today, when benefits that were the outcome of the Chicago development are now accepted everywhere as a matter of course. Prior to that development, livestock had been driven or shipped about the country to be slaughtered and dressed at its point of destination by local meat dealers. The shrewd Yankees at Chicago figured out that this was a wasteful method of operation. Why ship a whole steer when only 40 per cent was edible? So they proceeded to do the slaughtering and dressing and to ship the products, not the livestock. To this end, they perfected the refrigerated cars so that fresh meat could be shipped all over the country. And they availed themselves of the new invention of canning so that tinned meat could be transported all over the world. By centering the industry, waste was eliminated. The by-products were developed right along with the packing. Soon the boast went out that they used "all of the hog but the squeal."

The result was that meat was brought within the price and reach of people who had not hitherto been able to obtain it. The American worker found that he could get meat, and he could afford it. The United States became a meat-eating nation. And, not only did the packers thus supply the people with a wanted commodity, but as the demand arose they boosted the business of raising livestock. In the cattle and sheep lands to the west and southwest, a vast new enterprise began to grow.

During the war, Nils Morris, one of the pioneer packers, obtained contracts for provisioning the troops—a gain to Chicago business which meant more men working in the stockyards, more houses springing up round about, more numbers added to the Chicago population.

Where did the workers come from? Immigrants mostly, and from every part of Europe. Along Halsted Street a babel of foreign tongues arose. Signs on stores were written in languages few Chicago-born citizens could read. Soon you might go blocks and not hear English spoken.

And the cattle? That story has been well told in *The Trampling Herd*, by Paul I. Wellman. After the war, men of the South, returning to their homes in Texas, found that during their four years pre-occupation with war their cattle had multiplied. They had suffered heavy losses, their capital was gone, their business was at a standstill, but here was a source of wealth—if they could get it to Chicago.

The famous cattle drives began, a quarter of a million in a herd. Across incredible miles the great crowd of beasts were driven, and against one hazard after another. There were desert areas where there was no grass or water and the animals had to be pushed along on the quick run to get across before they starved or died of thirst. There were areas where Indians were still hostile and still formidable and attacks had to be fought off. There were wide rivers into which the whole procession went floundering, cattle and horsemen alike, fighting the current. Snowfall was dreaded.

Cattle will not paw through the snow to reach the grass as horses will. More dreaded, and dreaded continuously, were the stampedes. A lightning storm might set the whole vast herd in panic motion, hoofs thundering, horns clashing. At night, when the animals had lain down to rest, the slightest feel of storm in the air would send the horsemen circling round the creatures—those mournful cowboy songs originated as “cow lullabies” to soothe and quiet nervous cattle. From the Rebel cry of Civil War days the distinctive yipping yell of the cowboys has come down. On they drove, the stampedes rounded up, the rivers forded, dust rising in a cloud above the lowing and the bellowing, crossing the plains—through “hell and high water” as they phrased it, to the nearest rail head in Missouri.

Chicago got the beef and asked for more.

The industry continued to expand, meeting the ever-increasing demand it had aroused. There would be trouble at the stockyards as time went on, plenty of it. Years later, a young upstart would come nosing around the place—Upton Sinclair. He’d see some things that weren’t just the way they should be, and he’d write a book, *The Jungle*, that would set people talking so that something had to be done about correcting what was wrong. And the government would begin asking questions, putting their men in to do the meat inspecting. Then the workmen would begin to think they ought to have some say about the hours they worked, the pay they got. Yes, trouble, adjustments, strife, but the industry would continue to hold the top place it had won early, growing bigger as the century drew on.

Chicagoans have had to endure much for their stockyard fame. Their city would be dubbed “Hog Butcher to the World.” It would be disdainfully referred to as “that gigantic abattoir on the shores of Lake Michigan.” Seemingly, the world with provoking stupidity would continue to assume

that nothing went on in Chicago but the slaughtering of livestock. Visitors from New York, from London, would arrive with one fixed idea—to visit the stockyards, and in their curiosity there would be a kind of morbid, gloating fascination, not altogether clean. Telling of their visit, there would creep into the account something that gave an odor of indecency, as though these elegant visitors had been witnesses to something which had come up to their most lurid expectations and was altogether shameful.

Such a reaction is permissible to only one group of people—those who are on principle strict vegetarians. Their repugnance, horror or disgust would be based upon a reasoned and justifiable conviction. But how many of those supercilious visitors, who were not vegetarians, would, their visit over, hesitate to order up a good planked steak or a roast? And if they did—?

Poor Chicago! How many good works she would produce which brought top rank in a dozen worthy fields, and yet the stigma would remain. Chicago meant just one thing to the world at large—stockyards! And, alas, for many years, whenever the wind blew west by south, the stockyards *did* pervade Chicago, the reek was in the air. “The Bridgeport smell,” the oldtimers called it, after the earliest of the stockyards. But perhaps the thrifty organizers of that great industry, or their descendants, bent on using “everything but the squeal,” have found some new profitable undertaking that absorbed even the offending odor, for the reek has all but gone. A tainted wind no longer brings a general embarrassment upon the city.

With the advent of railroads, Chicago launched another industry—the business of manufacturing railroad supplies. To the foundry and machine shop of Scarville and Sons, later the Chicago Locomotive Company, came the first order for passenger and freight cars from the Galena and Chicago

Union Railroad, and here the first locomotive built west of the Allegheny Mountains was turned out, followed by ten more in the first year.

In 1864, the first pullman car was built. Nowadays one speaks of riding pullman, of getting a pullman reservation, with never a thought that Pullman was the name of a man.

George M. Pullman, you remember, was the smart lad who undertook to hoist Chicago's favorite hotel out of the mud. That task successfully completed, he entered upon another. Coming to Chicago from the East by train, he had found it impossible to sleep. With the railroads continually adding more and more mileage and more and more people traveling upon them, why should there not be an improvement made in the comforts of travel?

Pullman bought two old cars from the Chicago and Alton railroad and started in to experiment. He was a cabinet-maker by trade, and that skill fitted him for this enterprise. He worked out the details, devised the upper berth, and produced a \$20,000 model car in '64.

As often happens with a new idea, difficulties were encountered in winning its adoption. The world clamors, "Give me something new, something original," but the original is often regarded as a freak, for the world, having no standards of comparison, has trouble in estimating the value of the new, so that many an originator begins to wonder in dismay if the "new" and the "original" are, after all, what the world actually wants. But, despite apathy and rejection, Pullman had backing, and he managed to persist. One story has it that his car won acceptance when he offered it for Mrs. Lincoln's use, following her collapse at Chicago after that exhausting and harrowing funeral cortège in which Abraham Lincoln's body was brought home by rail, passing slowly across the nation with stops at every black-draped city on the way. Mrs. Lincoln accepted the use of the car from Chicago to Springfield, the final stop, and in this way the invention came to public notice.

By '67, pullman cars were in use, and their comfort and luxury, what with the berths, the carpeted floors, the upholstery, was quite generally approved. Dining cars appeared soon after, and by '69 "*de luxe*" trains were running between Chicago and San Francisco.

The little "shop" gave way to a great plant and more workmen, more houses were needed. South of Chicago, outside the city limits, Pullman would in time build a model town for his workers, "a town from which all that is ugly, discordant and demoralizing is eliminated." On the 3,000-acre development, life would be ordered according to Mr. Pullman's ideas, with Mr. Pullman being a combination landlord and lawmaker. The workers would pay rent to him for their neat, well-equipped houses. They would pay him for the water and the gas he had purchased for them. They would send their children to the schools he had erected for them, and presumably they would attend the churches he supplied them with.

But this plan lacked one necessary element which Mr. Pullman had not taken into consideration. It lacked that essential of the American spirit, individual freedom. The project was far too feudal to satisfy either those of Yankee stock or those who so quickly caught that infectious spirit or those who came with love of freedom nurtured in their hearts. Mr. Pullman would be a hard, embittered man in the days to come when labor strife darkened the horizon and he awoke to realize that he had not succeeded in building a model town from which all that was "ugly, discordant, and demoralizing" had been eliminated.

But, in the meantime, he had added another big industry to Chicago's increasing number.

There was a time not so long ago when every village had a blacksmith's forge and children would gather about the wide door, wide enough for carriages to enter, to stare in fascination at the big, brawny, smutty man who could hit

the ringing, crashing blows upon a red, glowing hoop of iron, sparks springing in an arc. Now, down at South Chicago by night, the sky glows and flares with the firelight of the great rolling mills, and children many miles away wonder at that ruddy, dancing glow in the heavens which fades and flames in a waving band and never ceases.

No one name stands out as a "first" in that industry; there were a number of names, and quickly the names ceased to be of men but were instead of big corporations, impersonal. The Lake Superior region was rich in iron ores and in copper, Illinois had apparently inexhaustible supplies of coal. (In 1939, despite a half century of extensive mining operations, it was estimated that not more than 2 per cent of Illinois' coal reserves had been tapped.) With a waterway connecting the ore at the north and the coal at the south, Chicago was the logical center for the development of steel production in the Midwest.

Back in 1833, Asabel Pierce had a blacksmith shop. When the stages ran between St. Louis and Chicago he did the iron work for them. There he manufactured the old "Bull" plow which had a wooden molding board. There the first steel plow made in the west was turned out.

Captain E. B. Ward built a blast furnace three miles down on the North Branch and followed that up with another one on the South Branch. When, in '64, a man named Bessemer invented the process of refining pig iron into steel (Mr. Bessemer, unfortunately, cannot be claimed as a Chicago man!) the process was quickly introduced, and down in the foundry on the South Branch those first steel rails rolled in the country were produced.

The rapid development of the rolling mills, the accessibility of iron and coal, acted as a magnet for manufacturing in general. Here, at Chicago, was the material the manufacturers required. In the vast Middle West area was an expanding market as villages turned into towns and towns into cities and the farmers needed more and more supplies. And

here also were the transportation facilities for shipping by water or by rail. So a great number of manufacturers of one product or another picked up their businesses and headed for the "Boss Town."

And Chicago built more streets, more shops, more factories, more houses and added decimals to her population figures.

One industry gave rise to another. Those new houses in Chicago meant more lumber. And in it came from the heavily wooded areas of near-by Wisconsin and Michigan, to take shape in Chicago as buildings and as furniture. The lumbermen up in the woods were riding the "second hump" as they called it. The first of the three had started back in the forests of Maine. Now the industry was coming to the center of the country. The third hump would be, in our own times, out in the tall timber of Oregon and Washington in the far Northwest, and by then lumbermen would begin to wonder where they could go next. But no one was asking questions then. No one foresaw the need of going further west for the supply. It was there, plenty of it! The lumberjacks swung their axes and cried "Timber!" And the tall trees fell with a crash of tearing roots and branches. Rooted with iron spikes the men rode the log jams in the rivers and made a sport of that for holidays. Sweating, they bent over tackle and hauled and hoisted the long bark-covered logs onto the open cars of those railroad spurs which thrust up into the forests. It was a big job to keep Chicago supplied. She always asked for more.

More men meant more bread, and out went the increasing number of farm implements. In came the increasing bushels of wheat, arriving from ever farther and farther away as new farm lands were opened up, wild prairie grass giving way to miles and miles of grain fields, ordered and docile, ripening under the hot blaze of summer.

The mail-order business began and flourished, a development in which Chicago led the way and held the mastery. Soon Montgomery Ward's catalogues would be eagerly awaited and in far-off homes a shopping list would be made up which would range from farm tools to house furnishings, to a new dress for the farmer's wife and toys for the baby.

In Chicago, the retail stores multiplied, and the big ones, still existent, gained prominence. Way back in 1844, A. C. McClurg had started the bookstore which, along with others, today serves Chicago's literary tastes. In '64, George W. Lyon and Patrick J. Healy established their music house. In '65, the Marshall Field store, originally known as Field and Leiter, was open for business on principles which would bring world recognition and amass a fortune. In '65, Carson, Pirie, Scott became a rival for the department store trade.

It is impossible to cover all that wide range of interlocking growth . . . Farther and farther away the magnet pull of Chicago was felt, more and more strongly. Letters, long awaited, were opened on the wild cliff shores of an Aran island, in a town in a valley by the Rhine, under the shadow of Vesuvius, and the strange words would be read—Halsted Street, Archer's Road, State Street, Chicago . . . Lads whose families had pressed far out to homestead in the West turned back to make their way in the big city. From East and West and North and South the stream poured in, men and produce, mounting as it came.

It was indeed a time for jubilation for the businessmen. Only . . . Well, it didn't really amount to much of anything, of course, nothing to it, but . . .

There was something new and of a startling nature coming up. Workingmen—oh, only a few "nuts" of course!—were talking strangely. They were talking loud enough to be heard. They were doing queer things, not behaving themselves. Odd stuff, outlandish. You never heard the like before.

No one, back in 1850, had paid much attention when a

printers' union had been organized, nor when, in '52, that was succeeded by the Chicago Typographical Union, but now—!

Clubs and societies among tailors and wagoners and carpenters, a score of trade unions by '63!—and miners down in the coal fields—farmers—

What did it mean?

Laws which had been worked out and applied to an agricultural civilization were not doing very well in an industrial one. Railroads had come, mines had been opened up, factories were operating, large corporations were being formed. And the laws remained those of a rural state, for the new industrialism, with its vastly different way of life, new laws hadn't been made. The working people felt the pressing need of lawful regulations for the new conditions, and since no one else was doing anything about it, they started in as best they could to make some rules. And for that, they had to get together, form unions.

Farmers who had once driven their produce along the road by ox-team were having trouble with that vastly superior device, the railroad. What had appeared as a blessing was now heartily cursed, for the railroads were charging the farmer more than he could afford to pay. But could he go back to ox-carts? No. Some other farmer would keep on using the railroad, get his produce to Chicago quickly and receive better prices than his slow-moving neighbor. Could the farmer sit down and have a talk with the railroad, explain his side of it, straighten things out? Well, hardly! The men he came in touch with on the railroad were only fellows working for a salary. They had nothing to say about the rates. Well, wasn't there any kind of law to put a stop to this?

There wasn't, not one.

There was the Grange, an organization made up of a number of farmers. It wasn't exactly a union, for it served the farmer in a number of ways, both educational and social, and the whole family looked forward to a Grange picnic.

Still it was an organization where farmers met, discussed their troubles, laid out plans. They were talking now, and very much in earnest. By '71, farmers would begin to be felt as a political force.

The drift toward unionism was not confined to any one group, it was general, if somewhat sketchy. Many of those first organizations would not long endure. They were easily crushed. But out of their failure and collapse other attempts would rise. The National Labor Union was organized in 1866, the Knights of Labor in '69. The American Miners' Association, begun shortly after the Civil War had started, lasted three years.

The native stock, faced with new problems, worked side by side with immigrants who faced the same problems. Where the Yankees had not figured out a solution for themselves, which they often did, the immigrants could suggest one. Many of them came from countries where workers' organizations were an established custom. It seemed natural enough to the German-born to proceed along lines of group action which had been evolved in their homeland. English miners, bringing some previous experience across the sea, called the conference which led to the first miners' organization in Illinois.

Strikes by miners in '63 were answered by a law, but not the kind of law the miners wanted. This one was called the La Salle Black Law, and it worked out so that its enforcement acted as a strong obstacle to any effort of the workmen to join together to attain their ends. And it carried with it penalties of fine and imprisonment which could be applied pretty much in accordance with the interpretation of a local judge. For twenty years that law confronted workmen as a forcible weapon which could be used against them.

In that early attempt to unionize, the miners envisioned a wide scope of worthy activity. They agreed that their organization be formed, "to mutually instruct and improve each other in knowledge, which is power, to study the laws of life, the relation of Labor to Capital, politics, municipal

affairs, literature, science, or any other subject relating to the general welfare of our class." They had something to say on child labor and on prison labor, on the need of free education and compulsory education for children under fourteen, and for the eight-hour day. In '66, there were a number of eight-hour-day leagues throughout the state, and this so influenced the legislature that the state of Illinois was the first to avow an eight-hour day. The measure was, however, quickly withdrawn. In Chicago, employers warned they would discharge any man who held to *that* idea, and then John B. Rice, he who had built the first theater and was now mayor, threatened enforcement of the La Salle Black Law if any eight-hour-day nonsense was tried, and the businessmen breathed easier.

The first stirrings of labor were feeble and easily put down. Businessmen soon dismissed the ideas that had been put forward by labor as wild talk by foolish fellows who would have been a lot smarter if they knew how to behave themselves, work hard, get ahead on their own. The less of this union talk the better it would be for them.

War had brought another increase to the city which she did not welcome—crime.

It was as wicked a city as any you could name, and the wickedness was bold and flaunting. So many shootings occurred on Randolph Street between Clark and State, right in the center of town, that that stretch was known as "Hair-Trigger Block." Saloons were in profusion. Along Halsted Street there would be over a half dozen in a block. In the big hotels and round about them, saloons were elaborate and gaudy showplaces, equipped with a luxurious vulgarity that appealed to the man who had made his money fast. Gambling was open and on a large scale. The war had dislodged the last of the gamblers from the Mississippi riverboats, and they had settled in Chicago. Around the stockyards where men, coming in on cattle trains, wore the high-heeled spurred

boots and wide sombreros of their trade and swaggered armed along the streets, the quick-shooting law of the wild west held good, and gun feuds were frequent. And then there were boys who had learned to shoot in the army. They were restless, excitable. Somehow they couldn't settle down to the ordinary routine of living they had once known. They wanted the excitement and the danger to go on.

Chicago was a bad town. That was the name it had now, no blinking it. All over America it was known as wild, lawless, full of wickedness, and the stories of its shootings spread. And that reputation served to attract yet more law-breakers who sought to live by violence and stealth. To these also, the big, rich city was a magnet.

The good citizens lived through it and did not lose their faith in humanity. Hopefully, warm-heartedly, they continued with the best intentions, and each year saw the opening of some charitable or humanitarian institution. In '61, it was the Old Ladies' Home, later the Old People's Home. In '63, the Washingtonian Home was instituted for the treatment of alcoholics and narcotic addicts. '64 saw the completion of another of the several orphan asylums. In '67, the Central Free Dispensary began giving help to the sick poor. '68 saw the founding of the Newsboys' and Bootblacks' Home for indigent boys. In 1870, the Illinois Humane Society began its operations to alleviate the suffering of animals and children.

There was 283 deaths from smallpox in 1864. The city's death rate remained high. The water problem was attacked anew and by now the pollution of the lake water was well known. Believing that offshore the water would be clean, wooden tunnels had been built that ran two miles out to cribs where water was pumped in. Begun in '64 and completed in '67, the cribs did not suffice. The problem still continued. Chicago grew so fast that it was difficult to devise sanitary systems which would keep pace with her needs.



The river flowed backward!

Even with the cornerstone laid for her new water tower at Chicago and Michigan Avenue in '67, Chicago knew that more must be done than that.

Then a new idea was conceived. They would make their river flow backward! Yes, and then instead of emptying into the lake . . . There was something in the idea which tickled Chicagoans, above its solution of a pressing problem. They liked the sense of man's mastery over nature. They had forced the river to go in a straight line upon entering the lake. They had cut away that sandbar. They had hoisted up the level of the land. Now, they would make the river turn around and flow upstream!

In '65, the state gave authorization for this procedure, and in July, 1871, the thing was done, the new channel opened which reversed the flow. It was not too successful. Pumps had to work hard at it, but it did improve the sanitation, and Chicagoans were quite set up about it.

They were pleased, too, with the new Washington Street tunnel under the river, completed in '69. It relieved some of the traffic on the bridges. They would, in time, be less pleased with another civic matter that was settled in '65 when the rights of Chicago over its streets were ceded to traction companies in a ninety-nine-year lease.

But in the meantime they had their universities and their museums and their music. Many of Chicago's families moved in an enlightened world unsurpassed by any city in the country. To their homes came notables in the field of art, science, literature, education or government, and they counted these notables among their friends. '63 saw the Chicago Astronomical Society come into existence, and in '68 the Academy of Design began its commendable task of promoting taste for the fine arts. '68 also enjoyed sixteen weeks of Grand Opera. Theodore Thomas and his symphony orchestra were heard for the first time in '69, setting a new and high standard of musical excellence.

'69 brought another Republican Convention to the city.



She proceeded to give the virtuous man a horsewhipping

U. S. Grant was nominated for the presidency at Crosby's Opera House. Chicago began to feel like a maker of Presidents.

But there was nothing to feel pleased about in a small but scandalous incident in the following year. Chicago, though it doesn't seem to have realized it, saw its first exhibition of the European art of ballet dancing in the famed theatrical production, *The Black Crook*. The importance of the event was lost to notice by the shocking sight of so many female legs in tights. A stern Chicago editor had something harsh and disapproving to say on the subject. He was waylaid by an indignant and spirited member of the troupe, one Lydia Thompson by name, who proceeded to give the virtuous man a horsewhipping. The story of that disgraceful bit of violence spread across the country and added to Chicago's notoriety as a wild town where anything could happen.

The fateful year of 1871 was ushered in. While Chicago was declaring a little loudly (you don't blame her, do you? Remember her bad name!) that in proportion to her population she had more bookstores than any other city in the country, *The Chicago Tribune* issued a solemn warning. That was on September 10. There were, it pointed out, "miles of firetraps, pleasing to the eye, looking substantial, but all sham and shingles."

For all its blooming progress, flowering in 1871, Chicago was still a city built of wood, block after block. Its courthouse in its sedate square of green, its four- and five-story office buildings (the best ones) its fourteen "show-houses," its many tall-spired churches, its schools, its mansions of the rich, its rotting shanties of the poor—all wood, with only the most occasional use of stone or iron as ornament. The city was a huge, sprawling conglomeration of tinder boxes. They might call her Queen City of the Lakes, but she was only Slab City still.

With names now familiar to present-day Chicagoans coming into the story of expansion and development, it would be easy to make the mistake of thinking of the Chicago of that day as having some of its contemporary aspect. It might be well to recall how vastly different the city of that day was.

This country is so big and it has grown so quickly that the periods of its development overlap. Though some features of modern life have penetrated into the most remote settlements, many out-of-the-way sections carry on a way of life very like that of the big cities as they were fifty or seventy-five years ago. With a little travel in America, one can turn back in time and find a town very like the one that Grandma knew. Even the wilderness, yes, and the Indians can still be found. Find some out-of-the-way town still struggling to turn into a city, and you'll see some of the characteristics of Chicago back in those days.

Take the railroads, to begin with. Two years ago, I rode

on a train in South Dakota which was composed of engine, baggage car and coach. The coach had a coal stove to supply the heat. At mealtime, the train stopped at a depot, and the passengers got out to eat.

Though pullmans and diners had come into use in 1871, many were the trains that pulled into Chicago that were without them, and the stove still did duty in the coaches. It was quite usual for a train to make a stop while all the passengers went into the depot dining room—it was pronounced “dee-poe” with the “dee” stressed. Big as Chicago then seemed, it still had small-town ways. Businessmen who traveled frequently would know the trainmen by name, inquire after their families.

Michigan Avenue was then a residential street. It had a row of what were considered very nice homes, frame houses, two or three stories high. You can see their counterpart today among the well-to-do middle-class homes of any number of American towns, except that, I think, those older houses were of better construction, more honestly made, solid, well-joined and finished, having nothing of the jerry-built quality so common in much recent carpentering.

In front of Michigan Avenue, there was then a “green,” much narrower than the park of made-land we know today. Beyond that green lay a pleasant, sizable lagoon. My grandfather often took his children rowing on the lagoon of a summer evening.

Outside of railroads, all locomotion in the Chicago of the early '70's was by foot or horse. Even the street cars were horse-drawn, and the bicycle had not yet made its appearance. If a man wanted to get any place in a hurry, all he could do was take to his heels or urge on his nag. The sight of the doctor's buggy going down the street at a gallop never failed to stir compassionate wonder. Heavy drays for carting, pulled by massive horses especially bred for that work, crowded along the busy streets of the business section, straining at their loads, often causing a traffic tie-up when they

fell. The work of the Humane Society had much to do with horses, sometimes cruelly lashed and overdriven. Along Michigan Avenue, fine carriages with a coachman or two upon the box swept by in style, and the wealthy took pride in the smartness of their fast-stepping teams, the handsome, brass-studded harness, the gloss of the carriage, the livery of the coachmen.

Steamboats had, of course, come into use, but they were few in comparison with sailboats. Along the river docks that lined the banks, schooners and square-riggers were tied up, their masts and spars rising higher than the average of Chicago buildings. Ogden Slip, close by the river mouth, was a busy place, its wharves loaded with merchandise.

There was no electricity. Gas lamps lighted the streets. As dusk deepened, a hurrying youth would hasten from one corner to the next, igniting the lamps. Elaborate gas chandeliers hung in the most luxurious hotels and the most elegant homes. Only the poorer people made use of kerosene lamps, though often in a home where gas was used, a kerosene lamp would be cherished for the beauty of its design and still would be honored by use. My grandmother had one to the end of her days, and even though she had, in her lifetime, passed through the various stages of lighting, from candles to kerosene, to gas, to electric light, she vowed no light as cheery, as "wholesome for the eyes," as that of a kerosene lamp. She was no advocate for gas for cooking either. A coal or charcoal fire was best. Sometimes I thought the new things came too quickly for her, and that she grew perplexed and troubled by them.

Perhaps some of her nostalgia is in my blood, for I would give you all the flashlights in the world in exchange for a lantern when it comes to a night walk on a country road. The way the light would swing with your stride and the blackness would shift, rising and falling, and your shadow would march with the treetops!

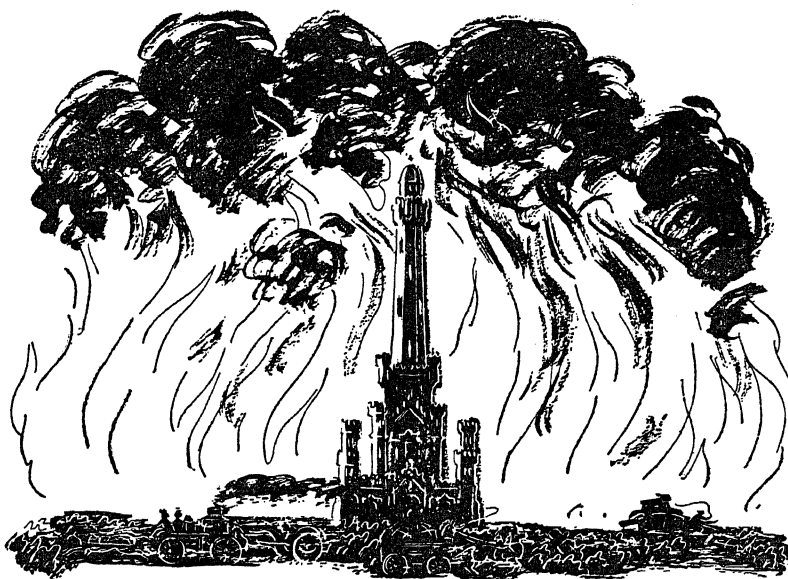
They carried lanterns in Chicago when they went out

to the barn by night. And most houses had a barn at the back. Residences of the well-to-do had a carriage house, a roomy and substantial structure with quarters for the coachman on the second floor. They kept cows, too, right inside the city limits, poor and well-to-do alike, though it is a little difficult to figure what pasturing the creatures got.

Wooden houses, barns and cows and kerosene lamps lead on into Chicago's tragedy of 1871.

Chapter Ten

RED SKY OVER CHICAGO



There was no course but to fly before it

DROUGHT gripped the Middle West. Men said it was the worst they'd ever seen. The big rivers shrank, the waters grew narrow, the banks wide. The little brooks dried up and became gullies of pale cracked mud. Out on the ranges, the water holes turned into dust pits, and the livestock died of thirst. The dreaded, fast-running prairie fires swept through the grass, leaped the plowed furrows that bordered a grain field and which had been devised as a fire check—for ordinary times. Up in the timber country, forest fires sent

their towering smoke into the sky. Miles distant, men looked up and saw the sun had a copper color and knew that somewhere a great fire raged.

It was a long, merciless summer, the drought and the heat holding week after week, all through July and August and on into September. From July until October only one inch of rain fell. Day after day the sun beat down on Chicago, blistering paint on the houses, warping shingles on the roofs, making the tar paper curl. An hour after sunset, heat still came up from the wooden sidewalks. By August, the leaves on the trees were already parched and brown. They rattled on the branches, came loose in a searing gust and skittered crisply along the sidewalks, over the faded grass. Families who could afford to spend the summer at a resort—a new idea, and one just coming into vogue—returned to find their city still sweltering under the dry hot blasts of wind that blew in off the baked prairie and the arid deserts of the West.

An increasing number of fires occurred, rising, as the last week in September went by, to an average of six a day. Saturday night, October 5, a fierce one broke out in the lumber district on the west side. The hard-working firemen had a long tussle to quench that blaze, a strong wind blowing, fanning the flames. For hours they labored and at last, worn out, they had it conquered. It had been big, \$750,000 lost. The next day, ladies walking to church many blocks away trod upon cinders and stepped over charred brands, scattered far by the wind.

All day Sunday the arid heat held, and the wind blew strong from the southwest, rising not falling, as the warm dusk settled over the city.

But let Mrs. Cornelius Wacker McLaury tell some of the story as she told it, in 1939, to my family of which she was a member. She was then close to 91, and she told it at a family dinner.

“Brother George and I were spending the evening with friends when about nine o’clock the fire bells rang. At that

time our city was divided into wards, and anyone familiar with the number could readily place the fire. The bells would clang loudly, then stop and toll the number of the ward. When the ward was given that evening the gentlemen began talking as to just where that ward was; soon the bells rang again and another ward was tolled, which seemed strange; soon again the fire bells clanged loudly and a third ward was given. That aroused us all, for these three wards were not adjoining."

The alarm was confusing to others besides that party of friends. The watchman in the City Hall tower had made an error in the location of the fire in sounding his first alarm, and the fire department, still exhausted from its hard battle of the night before, and, some said, demoralized by a celebration of that conquest—a common enough procedure at the time—tumbled out, bleary-eyed, in answer to this fresh summons—and headed in the wrong direction. They went a mile and a half out of their way before the error was discovered, and that, with the wind blowing, gave the fire a good head start.

Not that it would have mattered much, probably, in that city of dry wood, all ready for the burning. This blaze had begun in a poor neighborhood. "Those shanties were built close to one another without regard to street or alley . . . a fire would have a good start in that bunch of shanties, like kindling wood, and the wind blowing a gale . . . it was like setting fire to a box of matches."

This was over on the West side in the vicinity of DeKoven and Clinton Streets, a few blocks west of the South Branch of the river and about a mile south of that dividing line in the heart of the city where the main stem of the river branched north and south. This fire was not far from the charred area of the fire of the night before.

Mrs. McLaury's account continues: "Brother made the remark, 'If you were not with me I would go as far as Twelfth Street bridge and Canal Street and see if father's mill is in danger.' I replied, 'I will not hinder you, I will go also, I can

walk that far surely.' We started—I had no fear, for there were three or four gentlemen in the party. As we reached Canal Street we saw the crowd moving south."

Many have described that flight of the homeless from the fire. What Mrs. McLaury saw then was only the beginning of it, over on the West side. The fire had spread widely in that area, and the flames were mounting, lighting up the night.

"Oh! that dreadful scene, I shall never forget—women silently weeping, little children, half crying, half-dressed men with arms full, many carrying feather beds on their backs; all had something, even chairs and other small pieces of furniture. One man was carrying an empty drawer, and I asked him why he had nothing in it. With an exclamation he threw it down and cried 'My treasures all gone, I have nothing left—no, not one thing—all gone.' Pitiful indeed!"

With difficulty, Mrs. McLaury's party managed to reach their destination. There her brother rescued some books from the mill office and then they started back, hurrying along in that press of wretched homeless people. The firemen had hoped the blaze would be checked when it came to the burned area where last night's fire had been; it leaped the charred district in a sweep and roared on into new territory. No one had thought that fire could cross water; surely the river would put a stop to it. But when Mrs. McLaury's party, heading east, were halfway across the Polk Street bridge—thronged with people and two heavy drays upon it—the cry came, "End of the bridge on fire!"

"Everyone ran, horses were whipped up, the bridge trembled and rocked. The bridge-tender called, 'Stop your running or you will loosen her from the fastening and she will swing over the river.' That only made us run faster and then we had to jump from the bridge, she was rocking so badly."

The fire needed no bridges to make its crossing, though it marched grimly over them, too. That wind was strong enough to lift burning boards and carry them far in advance

of the main blaze. The air was full of flaming planks that started up fresh fires where they lighted. The fire, then in its infancy, jumped 200 feet of water with ease.

The whole force of the fire department, men and equipment, had entered into the struggle, but already their retreat had begun. One engine had caught fire and was abandoned to the enemy. Eastward the fire advanced, sweeping down upon the southerly area of the business district. East of Michigan Avenue, then as now, "there was a broad green" at that time "some seventy-five or one hundred feet in width, sloping to the water's edge"—that would be to the lagoon. "This was literally covered with families with all sorts and kinds of belongings."

There the people huddled, watching the city burn, dazed by the grandeur, the magnitude, the terrible beauty of that colossus that turned the night bright. Some saw strange, eerie things: "A Catholic church, frame, had burned to the ground, but high against the black and smoky clouds hung a fiery red cross without visible support, and many seeing it turned and with bowed heads crossed themselves." Perhaps in that swift hour of punishing disaster they had begun to see a vengeance on the wicked city.

The wind eddied and swirled in the streets, now making a dash in one direction, now in another. Drafts sucked gushes of flame around a corner, up an alley, and ever so slightly, the main force of the blow backed to the south. Still easterly, there was a drift northward in the wind which brought the very heart of the city within the path of destruction.

More fugitives were spilling onto the green in ever-increasing, agitated numbers, some whose homes had been in the business section, on upper floors above stores and offices. They cried out excited, awesome reports of the fire's spread—"Chamber of Commerce gone—courthouse burning—Methodist church and whole block going—now at State Street—Marshall Field's afire!"



There they huddled, watching the city burn

The reports were true.

The firemen still fought and still retreated, ever backing before the overwhelming onslaught of this monstrous foe. Against that wind, water from a hose would not carry ten feet, and again and again the fire sailed over the heads of the firefighters and alighted behind them.

Pandemonium broke out in the center of the city. Through the streets ploughed refugees from the West Side who had taken this direction in their flight. Out of the big hotels, the saloons, the night-working factories, the gambling houses, the decent homes, all sorts of people came pouring—men who had come to town on business, men who had brought their families along, show people, people who had residences on Michigan, on Wabash; vagrants and hoodlums, thieves and crooks out of hideaways.

Chicago businessmen fought frantically to rescue their city. Concerted efforts were made to save the City Hall. Frenzied, they worked beside the firemen, doing what they could. Desperately they strove to save their own precious properties. In offices and stores and homes they snatched at valuable papers, account books, ledgers, hauled and tugged at safes, at merchandise, dragged pianos, sofas, bureaus into the streets. Even while some of them found helpers at their sides, faithful employees or servants who had come running to give a hand, looting broke out all about them. Gangs of men and women alike ranged through the streets grabbing at whatever had suddenly, and for the first time in their lives, come within their reach. They broke into stores and made off with armfuls of merchandise, colliding with those who ran demented, carrying little pails of water, trying, trying . . .

In the bedlam of those doomed streets, the fire coming ever nearer, its glare lighting them up, the hot breath already upon them with its acrid smell of burning timbers, the touch of everything shocking in its terrible heat, the frightening roar sounding steadily above the shrill tumult of human outcry and the crazy, incessant ringing of the courthouse bell,

men fought to get wagons, carts, hacks—anything to haul their families, their goods, or both from danger. Drivers wrangled for high fees, took on a party, cast them out for another who offered more. Horses, made frantic by the falling sparks, reared and plunged or broke away, crashing and trampling through the crowd. Saloons kept open till they caught fire. In and out of them rushed maddened men, distracted by the inability to comprehend so enormous and immediate a disaster, dazed and overcome by their losses, unstrung by the uproar and chaos that swept round about them. To see the courthouse, with all its precious records dating back to Fort Dearborn days, actually going before their eyes . . . The New Union Station, swept with flame . . . Buildings like the *Tribune*, like Crosby's Opera House, the Tremont House, collapsing with a crash of walls, dissolving away into nothing. Booksellers' Row licked into a blaze with one sucking draft of wind . . . Buildings with marble fronts, with ornamental iron, with luxurious furnishings . . . Walls, spires, and domes flamed and collapsed.

As the heat grew intense, a mass of fire would be seen to appear suddenly in the air, hover an instant above a building, descend upon it in a rush. A paper held above a lamp, some distance from the flame, will suddenly ignite. It was like that. In horror, people told of fire that came loose and traveled through the air, of spontaneous combustion, of the visitation of the wrath of the Lord.

Rescues were being made. Down from upper stories of hotels and homes, shrieking women were borne, some clinging to a child, some crazed because a child was lost. In the surging crowd families were torn apart and went wildly screaming out for one another in an agony of dread and fear. The pandemonium went on. Yelling, sobbing, cursing, the people struggled in a congested, disordered flow trying to get away, away out of this nightmare inferno, away to the bridges, to the North Side, to safety.

And along the streets the looters ran—stores and homes

alike were pilfered. Alexander Frear, an eyewitness to the horror, wrote, "Valuable oil paintings, pets, musical instruments, toys, mirrors and bedding were trampled underfoot. Goods from stores had been hauled out and had taken fire, the crowd breaking into a liquor establishment were yelling with the fury of demons. A fellow standing on a piano declared that the fire was the friend of the poor man."

Many running with their booty found it suddenly ablaze in their arms . . . Lost children wandered, screeching in terror . . . A woman was seen kneeling in the street, hands lifted in prayer, the skirt of her dress on fire . . . Rats fled over the wooden sidewalks along which the flames ran swiftly.

It was melodrama—in reality. Melodrama in its crudest extreme, shocking and appalling, compounded of villainy and a few thrusts of valor, what was horrifying, what was heart-rending—an incredible reality of sensational event and violent emotion. Few in that scene had the ability to keep their heads.

Toward the bridges the throng strove—the bridges that led to the North Side and safety! If they could once get across the bridges—get out of the path of that devouring, monstrous, insane mass of fire, escape the tormenting hail of sparks, the searing, singeing heat, get loose from the crowding, shoving, trampling stampede in which they were caught up.

The bell in the courthouse had ceased to ring. The Gas Works caught fire and went with a boom and a great flare. Other explosions were heard—some of them man-made. General Sheridan was in the city, using the weapon of his trade—gunpowder—trying to blast an area the fire could not cross.

It was no use. The Fire Department couldn't stop it. General Sheridan couldn't stop it. Nothing man could do would halt a fire like that. Still spreading over in the West division, it was now miles wide and a hundred feet high. The waters of the lake alone could cry out "No" and put an end to it. Let it go, let it meet its conqueror, let it run to the lake. Get away to the North Side and safety—

And then the wind backed into the south. The fire headed north . . . !

There was no course but to fly before it, stopping for nothing. The people jammed across the bridges and through the one inadequate tunnel. The boats in the river caught fire. Little flames danced along the fragile spars, played about the cross-trees. Their masters raved and shouted, wanting the bridges opened, wanting to get out to the lake.

After the fleeing multitude came the pursuing fire. It covered the ground where once Fort Dearborn had been burned, where once, long, long years ago, the Mascoutin Indians, those of the Fire Nation, had paused in their migration and had held—what rites?—was it *this* they worshiped?—this destroying fury?

The fire swept over the main stem of the river in a rush, taking the bridges and the boats and the tall grain elevators in an eddy of the wind. It gobbled up the warehouses at Pine Street. It consumed Mr. McCormick's reaper plant as though it were a morsel.

Some nice bits lay ahead. Among other things there would be the \$250,000 mansions, landscaped with fountains and arbors; some pleasant roomy houses with wide verandas and greenhouses; some quite valuable, privately owned libraries; The Historical Society with its prized first draft of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation; quite a sizable number of clean, neat little homes in the German and Swedish sections. Theodore Thomas and his orchestra had yet to be routed out of the North Side hotel where they had gone following their concert. Oh, there was quite a lot for that fire still to do . . .

It went roaring savagely forward.

On the North Side, families had gone to bed. Many of them had looked out their windows earlier that evening, and had remarked that another fire had broken out way over on the West Side, but that was so far distant from their homes that they had felt no apprehension. Besides, they were used to

fires. If one were to stay up at night just to watch every fire that occurred!

So they put their children to bed and went off to bed themselves.

One lady, Mrs. E. W. Blatchford, records waking at about midnight and being at first conscious of the dry leaves blowing along the piazza floor outside her window . . . and then of the sound of feet . . . a hurrying crowd on the street . . . the rattle of vehicles. Rising, she saw a crowd steadily advancing, and that to the south behind them, the sky was all red and angry. She went upstairs, up to the top of the house, to the cupola, and there she was "first aware of the extent of the fire, constantly advancing eastward to the lake, looming in great waves, higher and higher . . . I watched the terrible sight but with no thought of personal danger." She returned to bed, only to be roused later by the sound of explosions.

Another lady, Mrs. Henry W. King, whose home was also on the North Side, would, within two weeks, write a long letter describing her experiences in the ordeal that came so suddenly upon that section of the city.

" . . . We had just moved to the city and settled ourselves for the winter. I had just laid in all my household supplies of every kind, including every winter garment for my children. We were never so comfortably situated in our lives—our new barn completed, our new house nearly completed; in fact, we were on the high tide of prosperity a fortnight ago today. Sunday was an uncommon day with us, we had just finished repairs in our church, had a new organ, a new choir and two wonderful sermons from our beloved pastor, Dr. Swing, and when we went to our beds were talking of our joys in rather an exultant manner.

"At one o'clock we were wakened by shouts of people in the streets declaring the city was on fire, but then the fire was far away on the south side of the river. Mr. King went quite leisurely over town but soon hurried back with

the news that the courthouse, the Sherman House, post office, Tremont House, and all the rest of the business portions of the city were in flames, and that he would go back and keep an eye on his store. He had scarcely been gone fifteen minutes when I saw him rushing back with his porters bringing the books and papers from the store with the news that everything was burning, that the bridges were on fire, and the North Side was in danger. From that moment the flames ran in our direction, coming faster than a man could run. The rapidity was almost incredible, the wind blew a hurricane, the air was full of burning boards and shingles flying in every direction and falling everywhere about us. It was all so sudden that we did not realize our danger until we saw our water-works (which were behind us) were burning, when we gave up all hope, knowing that the water supply must soon be cut off. We had just time to dress ourselves, tie up a few valuables in sheets and stuff them into our carriage when we had to deliberately leave our home and run for our lives.

"It was two o'clock in the morning when I fled with my little children clinging to me, fled literally in a shower of fire. You could not conceive anything more fearful. The wind was like a tornado and I held fast to my little ones, fearing that they would be lifted from my sight. I could only think of London and Pompeii, and truly I thought the Day of Judgment had come. It seemed as if the whole world were running like ourselves, fire all around us, and where should we go? The cry was, North, North, so thither we ran, stopping first at Mr. McGregor's address, where we found many fugitives like ourselves, trying to take breath, everyone asking every other friend, 'Are you burned out? What did you save? Where are you going?' then running on further north, up Dearborn Street to the house of another friend—followed ever by the the fire. On, on we ran, not knowing whither till we entered Lincoln Park. There, among the empty graves of the old cemetery, we sat down and threw down our bundles until we were warned to flee once more. The dry leaves and

even the ground took fire beneath our feet, and again packing our few worldly effects into our close carriage, we got into a wagon and traveled with thousands of our poor fellow mortals on and on—at last crossing a bridge on North Avenue and reaching the West Side” (that would be on the west side of the North Branch of the river) “where we found a conveyance at noon on Monday which brought us out to Elmhurst . . .

“I wish I could give you an adequate idea of that flight but it is impossible. The streets were full of wagons transporting furniture, people carrying on their backs the little they had saved. Now and then we would pass a friend seated on a truck or a dray huddling her children together, and her two or three little treasures snatched from the burning. It was only by some look of the eye or some action we could recognize friends—we were all so blackened with dust and smoke. The ladies, many of them dressed in a nightgown and slippers with the addition of a sacque or petticoat. Half of the men were in nightshirts and pantaloons. We reached our home at Clover Lawn at six o’clock on Monday night finding Mother and kind neighbors waiting for us. We had had nothing to eat since Sunday at four p.m. and when I said to my little children, ‘Won’t you be glad to get an apple?’ they said, ‘Why, Mamma, haven’t we had anything to eat? We didn’t know we were hungry.’ The alarm and strain upon our feelings was so intense that none of us, not even the children, knew what we wanted or what we had been through.

“The next day came the anxiety as to the fate of our friends, the thrilling accounts of different friends, inquiry into losses, etc., and to this day the excitement increases rather than diminishes . . . Our house is full all the time to talk over respective losses—seamstresses, teachers, workwomen whom we have known following us out to know what they shall do, what we can do for them. We are so much more fortunate

than most of our friends in having a roof to cover us, and thankful we are for it, too."

What had been snatched from the fire? The ladies found themselves without "brush or comb, pins or needles, knife or fork." One woman had tied up her silver in a bundle and at the last moment caught up a parcel of "dress pieces," leaving the silver behind. And clothing? The most impractical had been seized upon! "A friend of mine saved nothing but a little white dress—another lady has a pink silk dress—but no stockings . . . Imagine your friend Aurelia, for instance, with a \$1,000 India shawl and a lavender silk with a velvet flounce and not a chemise to her back, not a pocket handkerchief to wipe the soot from her face." Even though they were mindful of the desolation they had fled—"all the houseless, homeless creatures there," and felt "almost ashamed to be so comfortable" they could still laugh a little "just enough to keep alive."—"It was said that when the fire was raging one citizen left his house and family and fled on horseback down Michigan Avenue with his portrait under his arm."

But the laughter was brief. "I can't help mourning all my household goods, the dear things that can never be replaced—my books, the gifts of dear friends, the treasured lock of hair, Mother's Bible, relics of my little daughter Fanny, my wedding dress, and a thousand things I had saved for my children. My pictures, too, and my beautiful statue of the Sleeping Peri that I did delight in—all gone in a minute, and I can't help a little heartaching, although they are but the things that perish."

Some had escaped the fire by turning west and crossing the North Branch, getting in back of the fire, you might say. Those who had not made this maneuver turned in desperation to the lake itself, giving up their flight from the relentless pursuer. Some 30,000 cowered along the lake-rim at Lincoln Park, and there they stayed while the fire swept by.

"Men buried their wives and children in the sand with a

hole for air, splashed water onto the sand-blanket, then dashed into the water to stand chin-deep, breathing through handkerchiefs. Babies and weaklings here and there were smothered in the heat," Lloyd Lewis and Henry Justin Smith tell us.

Dawn found the flames still on their way along the North Side. All day the fire traveled on. In that area where 75,000 people had lived, by Tuesday only two houses would have escaped destruction, the Mahlon Ogden residence and Policeman Bellinger's cottage.

Back in the Central City, the fire continued to rage. Many people were huddled on "the Sands" by the river—that region which Mayor Wentworth had once set ablaze in the name of civic virtue, clearing off the then existing wooden shacks. There, trapped and suffocating, endangered by troops of horses, the people waited, helpless.

Meeting no hindrance, the fire completed its destruction of the business section and ate slowly south. The accounts which tell of the different hours at which citizens awoke to a sense of personal danger give some conception of how extensive and prolonged that conflagration was.

Mrs. McLaury's account, which deals with those who lived to the south of the Central district, Michigan Avenue around 18th Street and Prairie Avenue, tells of continuing danger long after the terror-stricken flight of the North Side residents. A brother of hers (not the one whom she accompanied to the mill) had been out of the city.

"Brother returned from his trip around five o'clock Sunday afternoon, being very tired he immediately went home and after dinner retired early . . . About four o'clock Monday morning he awoke, startled with the bright red light flooding his room—bounding out of bed to the window, seeing the city on fire and reflection so vivid on the water as to appear burning, his first thought was, 'if the water burns the last day must be here.' He had previously been annoyed with his Negro servants for their active interest in every fire that occurred. Now when he dashed into the hall and found them

all watching the fire he demanded, 'How long have you been up?' 'All night, Massa Charles.' 'Why didn't you waken me?' 'Why, Massa Charles, you say white man never goes to fire, he send his fireman and reads 'bout it in the morning papers.'

"Nearing daylight time" Mrs. McLaury reports that the streets were still "rapidly filling with people—all suffering with red eyes and coughing, for the wind was still blowing a gale and dust filling eyes and throats." As to the people on the green, they had spent the night there—"some sleeping as I passed in the early morning. Weather very warm, so they did not suffer in that way. All day Monday those who had food and drink took care of as many as possible, especially the children, but we had no milk for them."

But the flight from homes on the South Side had now begun.

"Around noon, Mother and I went to Aunt Anna to see how we could help her, she had been quite ill, Uncle in the East at that time."

Yes, she had been ill. Her little daughter—my father's sister—wrote a letter to another little girl. That letter was published in the *Troy Daily Whig*, November 10, 1871.

"I will begin at the beginning and tell you all the sad story . . . Mama was taken ill on Sunday coming home from church . . . that afternoon she lay on the sofa in our sitting room, very sick but refusing to send for a doctor. After supper, Annie and Freddie were put to bed and then my brother Cyrus and myself sat reading books that we should never see again. At ten o'clock, one of our servants came home from church . . . and with the girl's help I soon got Mama to bed. Cyrus and I, however, before retiring, looked out of the window for a long while at the fire, which was raging in the West division of the city; but the wind was in our favor, and the fire appeared a good way from us, so at last we stopped watching and went to bed.

"I was uneasy, however, throughout the night, and kept

running to the window to look at the fire. At two o'clock I went downstairs where Mama was sleeping (I was alone in the third story with the three younger children), to see what time it was. Mama was awake and had just had quite a fright. She had woke up suddenly and the moment her eyes opened they fell upon the sky which was bright with the reflected light of the fire. Thinking that the house was enveloped in flames, she rushed to the girl's room, saying, 'Mary! Mary! the house is all afire!' But the girl . . . having assured her that it was only the reflection of the fire, helped her back to bed, for she was very nearly exhausted from the effort she had made.

"After Mama told me this I went upstairs but soon came down again in slippers and shawl to watch the novel sight on the lake shore which was rapidly being filled with furniture, bedding and a thousand other things which persons were bringing there. Omnibuses were hurrying by filled with persons, the sidewalks were crowded with pedestrians lugging their goods to places of safety, and over all, the lurid sky. I was soon called upstairs by my little sister Annie, who was filled with astonishment and fear at the light which filled the room. After quieting her and Freddie who had been also awoke, I was about to stay with them when the front door bell rang and hurrying downstairs I found to my great joy that it was my cousin, Mr. H., who, smoked out of his hotel, came to see if he could be of any assistance to us."

(That must have been a relief to the responsible little girl whose Papa was away and whose Mama was sick!) This cousin brought alarming news of the fire—"but he also told us he thought there was no danger to our house, as the wind was in an entirely different direction . . . Sleep after such tidings was impossible so we arose and dressed ourselves—Mama too, sick as she was. The servants were sent downstairs to pack the silver. Papa's, grandpa's and grandma's portraits were taken down, Mama began to pack the trunks and all was confusion . . . While we were waiting for breakfast

several gentlemen came in and startled us by the awful news that Papa's office was gone and nothing saved from it . . . By and by they departed and we partook of a simple breakfast, about seven and a half o'clock . . . The streets began to block up and the awful report came that the wind had changed and the raging element was rushing toward us." Just then my aunt and two cousins" (Mrs. McLaury was of this party) "entered the house. They said, if you want to escape with your lives, go now. Then Mr. H. hired a man to convey the few things we had packed to safety. Then he mounted the wagon with the man and we were left to fight our own way through the crowd alone. That walk to my aunt's was too awful to describe—men, women and children filled the streets, cursing, swearing, shouting. Freddie was nearly convulsed with fright, and Mama had to drag him through the streets and alleys. The wind blew a perfect gale, and in this confusion we walked a mile and a half."

Mrs. McLaury's version has it that when the procuring of a wagon was announced to the sick lady, she exclaimed "What, take me in an *express wagon*!" According to her little girl's report she preferred to walk—and did.

All day Monday the fire continued to burn, and the news of the disaster spread throughout the nation. New York newsboys were crying, "Great Fire in Chicago!"—"Chicago Is Burning Up!"

Chicago men in that city on business tried frantically to get the details, not knowing if their families had perished. They were the more distracted when the telegraph office in New York informed them that the Chicago office had been moved twelve times and then gone dead. No word from the stricken city could be had. When communication was finally established, so great was the general sympathy throughout the country that telegrams to or from Chicago were transmitted without charge. Men rushing back to the city to try and find their families were transported free. On the trains,

strangers accosted them, pressed money upon them. Everyone wanted to help. Across the country rolled freight cars with large signs painted upon them—"Food for Chicago." And the railroads made no charge for that freight. Colonel James Fisk, Jr., drove a team of six-in-hand through the streets of New York to collect provisions "for the suffering victims of the frightful conflagration." Boston, St. Louis, Cleveland—they all came quickly, generously, to Chicago's aid, even those cities which had been her rivals and had found her conquests and her boasting hard to take. Far away in Europe, collections were raised and sent to Chicago. In England, Queen Victoria joined with a number of distinguished British authors in making Chicago a present of books with which to start a new library, a gift which Chicagoans must have found a little embarrassing, for it must be confessed that Chicago possessed no public library prior to the fire.

By Tuesday morning the fire had spent itself. When Chicagoans looked at the smoking desolation of their ruined city there was nothing in that vast waste of ashes and blackened, twisted wreckage and tumbled, crumbling walls to raise a ray of hope. True, the fire, which had burned itself out in the vicinity of Fullerton Avenue, then the city limits on the North Side, had not gone beyond 22nd Street to the south. The few homes and businesses beyond that line had been spared, and so had the Union Stockyards. But the ruin of the Central City, of a vast section of the West Side, and of all the North Side area was complete. The loss was enormous and crushing.

An estimated 250 persons had perished, though the general belief was that the figure ran far higher. The mortality over in those crowded shanties of the West Side must have been large. It was known to be high in the Chicago Avenue section of the North Side where the German and Swedish neighborhoods were. Many hundreds of people had been injured. Ninety-eight thousand of them were homeless. Seventeen

thousand buildings had been destroyed. The property loss was estimated at two hundred million.

But it was not in Chicago's spirit to be crushed. Standing knee-deep in still warm ashes, her dress a blackened rag, her face a smudge of soot, Chicago raised her voice and proclaimed—a boom was on! Now was the time to build! Now was the time to invest! Now was the time when enterprise would reap a rich reward!

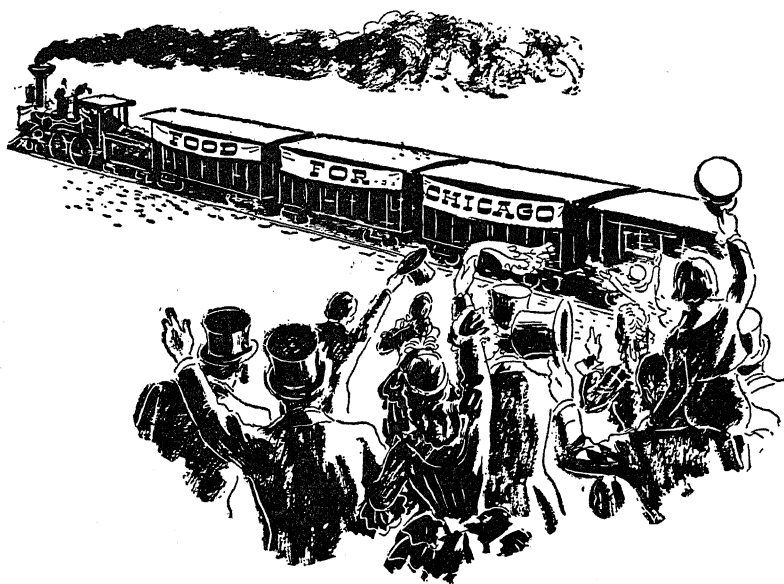
They believed her. Why wouldn't they? Hadn't Chicago proved her boasts time and again? Sure! Well, Chicago could have all the money she needed for a comeback. It was a good business investment, sound as a bell. You could trust those Chicago men to get the city stuck up again and running smooth in no time, running with a hum. A boom? If she said so, yes.

Monday, October 9, while the fire was still burning, mind you, somewhere, somehow, an extra edition of *The Chicago Evening Journal* was printed and in it was announced a meeting of the directors of the Board of Trade for Tuesday, October 10, at 10 o'clock.

Businessmen, returning to Chicago, reported that they did not meet a solemn face among their friends. Fortunes gone, businesses wiped out completely, these men were starting in to rebuild from the blackened ground up. Three things they had—energy, experience, reputation—and the third of these brought them the only other thing they needed—credit. What they had done before, they could do again. A saying went the rounds—"None of Chicago's rich men are rich by inheritance." And there was another one—"The richer a man is, the harder he works." That was the drive that was in them now. Chicago wiped off the map? Why, Chicago would be a bigger, richer city than she ever was before!

No wonder Chicago was called "the Phoenix City"!

Mrs. King's letter comments, "The hope and cheerfulness which our businessmen preserve is wonderful," and, speaking



Everyone wanted to help

of her husband, "He is irrepressible, has taken a store and will open it Monday next." Mr. King's partner was a Mr. Browning.

This lady might possess only one dress to her name—a "lavender silk with a velvet flounce," but she possessed, in common with other educated, churchgoing, well-to-do people of that day, a strong sense of social responsibility. Tuesday, and the day after, and the day after that again found Mrs. King back in the charred city assisting in the work of the Chicago Relief and Aid Society which her husband then headed. Into this depot on Tuesday poured those freight-car loads of food and clothing—fifty of them—for the needy of Chicago—and the needy just about included everybody!

But with all the help so generously given, so readily promised, Chicago was in a bad way those days. For a time there were many who had nothing but bare floors to sleep on, and the city was without gas or water, though, miraculously, the

water tower itself (if not the water works) came through the fire unscathed. (It is still standing.) People had to make out with candles and fetch water from the lake, and take what quarters they could find.

The looting went on. On the eleventh, Mayor Mason handed over the control of the city to General Sheridan and martial law was declared. The governor of the state had rushed a company of troops to Chicago directly the disaster was made known to him, and he was not pleased with the mayor's action. It was, in effect, an appeal for, and an acceptance of federal aid, and the governor thought the state quite competent to handle any needs Chicago might have. The two gentlemen wrangled fiercely but Sheridan remained in charge—with the assistance of Pinkerton's police.

The looting must have been of quite a serious nature, and Mr. Pinkerton must have been given quite a lot of authority, for a proclamation issued at that time strikes a high pitch in frontier sensationalism:

ALLAN PINKERTON — PINKERTON'S POLICE.

Thieves and Burglars!

"Kill these persons by my orders, no mercy shall be shown to them, but death shall be their fate."

At the same time, the mayor issued a proclamation in a milder tone, calling for lost trunks and personal property to be turned in to the nearest police station, or police will be "requested" to search houses, and "if necessary" to make arrests.

But to add to all of Chicago's immediate difficulties, a new and ghastly horror arose, and one that kept every nerve on edge—incendiarism.

It seems an incredible, inexplicable thing that among people who had so suffered from fire, there would be those who sought deliberately to loose that suffering anew. One wonders

who was mad—those who set the fires or those who declared they saw them set. Unquestionably, hysteria existed in those days and all Chicago was in a state of shock, but even with the tension high, the excitement violent, it remains a dark and ugly mystery.

Edgar Lee Masters, in *The Tale of Chicago*, speaks of this as “a strange wickedness,” and certainly it was.

“A boy was detected by a fireman in the act of setting fire to a building in 32nd Street. He was instantly killed. A Negro watchman shot and killed a man trying to fire a building at State and 32nd Streets. A woman was intercepted while applying a match to a barn on Burnside Street. She was captured and about to be hanged, but escaped. Two men were arrested while setting fire to a Jesuit church on the West Side. They were promptly dispatched. A barn on the corner of 20th Street and Burnside was found in flames; and at the same time a man of suspicious character was found on the premises. He was put to death at once . . . tarred rope and hay saturated with kerosene were found in some of the lumber yards. . . .”

The account goes on and on. A reign of terror certainly, and the more revolting for its clear implication of that lowest depths to which civilized man can sink—“lynch law.”

Was it Mrs. O’Leary’s cow who kicked over the lamp which started the fire which burned up the hay, which started the fire that burned up Chicago?

Ask a Chicagoan, and he will smile and tell you that’s just a myth. No one knows *how* the fire started, though as a matter of fact the O’Leary’s *did* live at DeKoven and Clinton where the fire started, of course, and they *did* have a barn, and there *was* a cow, and a lamp *was* found, and Daniel O’Sullivan, the drayman, *said* he saw the fire start there. . . .

Well, myth or fact, the Chicago Historical Society has a cowbell on display and there is a card under the cowbell



Was it Mrs. O'Leary's cow?

which identifies it as the cowbell which once adorned the neck of Mrs. O'Leary's cow; so now if the cow did *not* start the fire, why should the cowbell which once adorned Mrs. O'Leary's cow be so honored by The Chicago Historical Society?

Anyhow, what is a myth but a search for truth, and if the truth be elusive, should not the myth remain? It's better than nothing. And surely a condition of just "nothing" would never suit as lively and high-spirited a city as Chicago!

Chapter Eleven

BIG MAN, LITTLE MAN



An early "Gold Coast" was building up!

THE safes in the banks had been melted into metal lumps; greenbacks, gold and silver had disappeared into rubble . . . Ten days after the fire, Chicago's banks were paying cash on demand.

Building proceeded rapidly. Temporary structures shot up at a time when, in the ruined homes, coal which had been laid in for the winter was still glowing in the remains of the cellars. Soon, solid, permanent buildings of brick and stone began to sprout, for naturally enough, Chicago's thoughts were on fireproof structures. Joseph Medill, editor of the

Tribune (it was the *Tribune*, you remember, which had sounded a warning back in September), was elected mayor on a platform that promised a fireproof city. Nevertheless, in the rush to get going, many wooden buildings were erected and remained.

Sidewalks had been of wood, some dating back to the period of the pull out of the mud. Now that the city was swept clean of them, they were replaced with better ones of stone. Better paving went down on the streets, too, and by '74 there were twice as many improved streets as there had been before the fire.

In general, the aspect of the city and a number of its functions were improved. Both the fire department and the police department were enlarged, and by 1872 Chicago had a public library in which to put those books from England.

The new, permanent buildings were, of course, an improvement on the old ones. An English visitor, Lady Duffus Hardy, records, "The business streets are lined with handsome, massive houses, some six or seven stories high, substantially built, sometimes of red brick with stone copings and elaborate carving, while others are of that creamy stone which reminds one of the Paris boulevards."

On Prairie Avenue an early "Gold Coast" was building up. Here, for many years, would be the mansions of the Chicago big names, Armour and Pullman and Field and others of equal wealth and power. Renowned architects would answer to every taste the owner hankered for. The squat mansard roof would stolidly confront the dreamy turrets of a French chateau. One Chicagoan would choose to dwell in a bastioned Norman castle with only a drawbridge lacking.

Sumptuous hotels appeared. The new Potter Palmer House was not only "the first wholly fireproof hotel in the United States," it was the last word in an opulent luxuriance, richly carpeted, elegantly draped, profusely appointed with divans, mirrors, crystal and gilt all along its spacious corridors, its extensive halls, its choice apartments. The fame of its barber

shop soon became a subject of international comment. The floor was studded with silver dollars, and most people in relating that, added—*real* ones. Famous names would be written down on its register.

There is a story my grandfather used to tell of dining there with a cattleman from the West, wealthy enough and willing to pay what was asked, but, in his own language, nobody's fool. He glared at the waiter presenting the bill—ninety cents for an order of roast beef! "Why, see here, young feller, you couldn't *tote* ninety cents' worth of beef!"

The "Urbs in Horto" motto had been dropped in the rebuilding. It certainly wouldn't have suited a city where the trees as well as the buildings had been burnt down. Those Chicago hustlers might speed up the shoots of brick or stone but they couldn't make the trees grow fast. Back in 1869, Governor Palmer had appointed members of the South, West, and Lincoln Park Commissions to plan a park system by which Chicago would be encircled—a forerunner of the Burnham plan. Interest in the project lagged while the building rush was on, and Lincoln Park dismally retained the marks of its "forest fire" for some time. However, by 1880, it was favorably reported.

Chicago was hitting its old pace harder than ever. The number of hogs shipped in 1870 would be doubled by '72. Augustus F. Swift would introduce his revolutionary production ideas into the meat-packing business. Montgomery Ward would add another big business to the city. The immigrant hordes would continue to come in, supplying that cheap, unskilled labor Chicago had a need for. The population which had been 298,977 in 1870 would, by 1880, reach the figure of 503,185.

In that decade the cultural life would not lag behind. In '77, The Chicago Historical Society would turn up in new quarters. The Art Institute, absorbing the old Academy of Design, would take a little longer to move into its new building on Michigan Avenue and Van Buren, which it would

enter in '82. The Apollo Musical Club would be founded, and Theodore Thomas' symphony orchestra would be heard. Organizations with worthy titles would appear; the Philosophical Society, the Citizens' Association (to promote municipal reforms), the Chicago Women's Club (founded in an effort toward higher civilization) and the Moody and Sanky Tabernacle, seating 8,000, would be erected. There would be a reception to Grant in the Palmer House, at which Mark Twain would give the toast. And *The Chicago Daily News* would begin its long and distinguished career. Also, a man by the name of Altgeld would settle in Chicago.

Far from having wiped the city off the map, the fire had actually advertised and promoted Chicago. It was on the map now, bigger than before. Business came back strong and knew increasing profits. That is, the big ones did and most of the smaller, though here and there the disaster was not surmounted and tragedy was lasting. It was said that that stanch oldtimer, Gurdon Hubbard, he whom the Indians had named the Swift Walker, now old and blind, never recovered from the effects of the fire. And there had been some enterprises, just starting out, which had not won recognition before the fire and which failed to get that necessary credit afterward. To such as these the Great Fire meant irreparable loss. The sufferings of these people showed up in the depression of 1873 when some "well-bred" people were found among the tramps and vagrants.

Yes, there was a depression. And in '77, worse trouble. Conflict lay ahead.

Some people had been saying harsh things about Chicago. They said the money lust had got her, that all she cared about was the dollar. They condemned her for her love of material possessions, for her vulgarity, for her wild, speculative, gambling spirit, and for her aggressive hustle and her loud-mouthed boasting.

Well, was she unique? What about the American char-

acteristics of the new West at that time? In *The History of American Government and Culture*, by Harold Rugg, you get a picture of the environment out of which Chicago rose.

By and large, you could say the foremost concern of everybody was how to make money, as much of it as possible, and how to acquire better things. The houses in the smaller cities, in the little towns and out in the country, were cluttered affairs, and every woman who could afford it had carpets and portieres and whatnots in profusion. There seemed to be a passion in the heart of every housewife to accumulate possessions and to retain them. What couldn't be crammed into the parlor or the dining room or the bedroom was stored in the attic. But while the women led an absorbed existence in possessions, they, like the ladies of Chicago, took an interest in the higher life. Churches were well attended and had a social and community interest, in addition to a spiritual one. Women lent themselves to good works. The humanitarian, the reform spirit lived on.

The men were hustlers. They joined lodges. Secret and fraternal organizations offered material benefits and business contacts. Community pride flowered in every growing community, and nearly all of them were growing. If the smaller towns produced mere squeaks of boosterism beside Chicago's deep-throated bawl, it was size that determined the volume, not inclination.

In these general aspects then, Chicago was not unique. Rather, she was an exaggeration of existing trends. Her faults and virtues were cut out of American cloth and shaped to American pattern, and in Chicago it was the style to be extreme.

Even the coming conflict in Chicago was not peculiarly her own. It rose out of the new industrialism, and it was nationwide. Only—here again, it showed up large in the big city.

The conflict was between the men at the top and the men at the bottom, between employer and employee. Chicago had

passed rapidly from the frontier stage into an agricultural civilization and on into the industrial. The changes produced by the new industrialism were so vast and revolutionary that the adjustments to this new way of life were anything but smooth. Out of that struggle toward adjustment would come turmoil and confusion and bitter strife for decades to come.

The new industrialism produced big business. It turned small shops into great production plants. What had once been a blacksmith's forge was now a rolling mill. Where one man had owned his own business and employed a couple of helpers, one man now employed many thousands, and the business had become a corporation. The old and generally friendly employer-employee relationship on a personal basis had disappeared. Men would work for men they did not know, men would employ men they never saw.

One big concern or a combination of several big concerns would absorb and dominate all the business in one particular industry. A man with a small amount of capital might open a blacksmith shop and compete with other blacksmiths. A man with a small amount of capital could not compete with a giant industry. Opportunity for ownership, for business venture and personal advancement grew increasingly limited.

More and more, power went into the hands of men in control of big business enterprises. An increasing number of men had less and less to say about the conditions under which they worked. At the top, a few men made a quantity of money. At the bottom, a great many men made hardly any. The distance between those on top and those below widened rapidly. Industry in general could not be regarded as a whole. It was split into two distinct factions, more widely separated, more opposed, than they had ever been in the old employer-employee relationship of the agricultural era.

The men at the top were organized. The big enterprises entered into agreements for their mutual benefit and formed business associations to promote their interests.

The men at the bottom were not organized. They had no

associations to promote their interests, and no agreements existed between one group and another which would be mutually beneficial.

The men at the top could obtain all the cheap labor they needed. The men at the bottom could not obtain good wages, and often they could not obtain any.

“When Capital is organized and Labor is not, wages are low and working conditions are bad . . . Nobody has ever disproved Adam Smith’s conclusion that wages tend to the least amount upon which the laborer can live and reproduce . . . The humane employer who would rather pay a decent wage cannot compete with the others who would not . . . Organization of labor is essential if American standards are to be preserved, if the condition of American labor is to be better than that of the European serf of three or four centuries ago.” (From a brochure, “A Forgotten Governor,” prepared and read to The Chicago Literary Club in 1932 by Judge William H. Holly.)

The men at the bottom sought to organize. The men at the top sought to prevent their doing so. The sense of injustice and outrage grew strong among the labor group. Its protestations roused a sense of outrage and injustice among the owner group. Since this conflict was to continue in Chicago—as well as throughout the nation—breaking out in violent and tragic episodes that have become historic, and since, time and time again, Chicago was the birthplace of a new labor movement, suppose we do something that was practically impossible for either of the conflicting groups to do—suppose we try to look at it from both sides.

When one inquires into the conditions under which labor existed at that time, it requires no great feat of imagination or no great fount of sympathy to reach the conclusion that labor’s sense of outrage had justification.

Incredible as it seems, in the Chicago of ’73, with all the

building going on, thousands were unemployed. The effect of the nation-wide depression was felt, of course, most heavily among the poor, the unskilled, the ill-equipped. Into the new city had come slums worse than any the old had known. Those slums bred trouble, plenty of it. In '74, to give one indication, there were 25,000 arrests.

The most stony-hearted reactionary among us today would be quick to agree that the labor conditions of that day were abominable. Indeed, the length of hours worked, the wages paid, the often unsafe, unsanitary conditions under which the workers, men, women and children, labored, bring to mind Robert Burns' great line, "Man's inhumanity to man."

No compulsory education law existed. Little girls under 'teen age hurried into department stores, ran to and fro as cash-girls all day long and traveled home alone after dark fell. And these were the more fortunate children. To work in a department store was much nicer than to work in a factory twelve hours a day, though even factory work had an advantage over piecework done at home, making artificial flowers by hand or sewing on cheap garments brought in by the lot from some near-by sweat-shop. Then, the little worker was confined in one crowded room, day and night. No wonder if the small bodies grew stunted and weakened and the minds were dulled and sullen!

And the rooms they lived in were not pleasant places. Poor people inhabited unheated wooden shacks that lacked every sanitary provision. One building was crammed against the next on narrow, dirty streets, littered with filth. A horde of people thronged a single house, whole families lived in a single room.

The immigrants stuck together in national cliques, whole districts being from this country or that. What friends did they have except among their own people? Most of them were of peasant origin, coming off the land, new to city life. They did not come from slums. They did not bring slums with



They did not bring the slums with them

them. The slums grew up around them because of the poverty in which they lived, a poverty so extreme that even cleanliness was in the class of luxury beyond their grasp.

What did these people think of the land of promise to which they had come? Because they *did* think, and that was something which, in their ignorance, the men at the top didn't realize. Those who made the trip across the ocean had done so because they had hope of bettering themselves. For that they must be credited with some of those qualities Americans prize so highly—initiative, venture, enterprise. Not all came with the sole thought of material betterment. Many came for the same reasons which had motivated the Puritans—to escape tyranny and oppression. To such as these, freedom and justice were beautiful, shining ideals they longed to serve. The noblest beliefs of man can be very simply stated. All people can grasp them. Those slum dwellers knew what America promised, and that they had not found it.

No attempt was made by any civic group to assist them in the process of Americanization, help them overcome their language difficulties, familiarize them with the customs of the country, provide them with opportunity for self-improvement. Instead, they found themselves preyed upon, their ignorance of language and of custom making them the victims of unscrupulous cheats and sharpers. They were ridiculed and mocked at, called bohunks and polacks and wops.

Chicago offered no friendly, welcoming hand to these hopeful adventurers in a great democracy. All Chicago wanted from them was cheap labor and no trouble. But Chicago was to find she could not have both. Yet, no matter what suffering, what deprivations are imposed, no matter how weak and utterly helpless a depressed class may be, somehow the upward struggle will be effected, as though it were a law of growth in nature which no tyranny of man could thwart. From the days "when nearly naked women, harnessed like animals, pulled cars of coal along the dark underground passages of mines, when children six and seven years of age worked from daylight to dark in the textile factories and when labor organizations were considered criminal conspiracies," progress would somehow be achieved.

That such awful conditions do not exist today we may be thankful for. But for that, our thanks must go to these very laborers themselves. It was they, the weakest, the most helpless in our midst, who brought about reform. The statutes on the books which now forbid such tyranny were won by their combined protest and appeal. And for that contribution to the progress of a nation, they suffered continual abuse, increased hardship and danger to their lives.

"It is worth noting that very seldom if ever has any chamber of commerce, any manufacturers' association, or any organization of businessmen given the slightest aid or encouragement toward securing legislation to prevent any abuses of child labor or for the protection of women. Nearly always

have these organizations fought such reforms," Judge Holly tells us.

Two types of men emerged as spokesmen for the labor group, one foreign-born, and one American-bred. The foreign-born brought from the old countries ideas by which oppression might be combated. Some of these ideas were of so extreme and violent a nature that they would prove offensive to American thought, and as these extremists made themselves heard, their enemies in the power group would be quick to stir the old Nativist enmity against "foreigners" to a blind and undiscerning hate. The other type, American born and bred, and possessor of those American ideals which were outraged by the growing denial of the rights of equal opportunity, inclined toward democratic procedure for the remedy of abuse.

As their first feeble attempt at self-betterment was met with opposition of a crushing, often brutal force, the rebellious feeling of the labor group gained in intensity. They were wronged. Their enemies were monsters of iniquity. They would make these cruel, heartless tyrants play fair.

So much for the protagonists on one side of the conflict. What about the others?

Granted that the money lust can blind some men to all but money values, and that to such as these questions of right or wrong are weighed upon the scales of profit and loss, the top men did not, as many of the labor group assumed, cower before the twinges of their consciences and harden their hearts for vengeful acts of cruelty. In general, they acted upon convictions which they held as righteous, sound and basic, and some of these convictions were the result of deep-rooted beliefs, quite as American as the one about equal opportunity. And their own experience in living seemed to them to prove the rightness of their convictions.

Many of them were of pioneer stock, and all of them were

imbued with the pioneer feeling. The frontier bred a hard way of life. The drive that broke the prairies and turned wilderness into homeland was in them.

Knowing what was required of a man to make out against the wilderness, those frontier fathers bred sons for hard and everlasting labor, spunk and go, initiative and daring, and they laid a lot of stress on common sense, on what was practical and immediate and of material advantage. What the frontier held in most contempt was a lazy, shiftless, no-'count man.

Those fathers scolded at their children . . . "Learn to paddle yere own canoe. Git goin' and stick at it. Speak up for yereself. Got a tongue in your head?—and two hands?—ask questions and larn quick; lay aholt to whatsomever comes along. Landsakes, ye're slower'n molasses in wintertime! Look where ye're a-goin'—if that was a snake 'twould a bit ye. When *I* was a shaver I could beat an ox haulin', an' I could figger smarter'n a school marm; al'ys up 'fore sun-up, work past sundown. Bound to git somewheres ef ye jest keep goin'. If a man ain't a plumb darn fool he'll al'lys hev tobaccy in his old tobaccy box."

Child labor? How many bred on the frontier took up chore work as toddlers, chores that grew harder with each year and made young muscles strain and tighten? Long John Wentworth was not the only man who, as a boy of ten, worked alongside of the men in the fields. Compulsory education? Why, if a fellow wanted knowledge, he'd get it for himself. Abe Lincoln did, didn't he? Nothing compulsory about that! And, back in Andrew Jackson's day, west of the Alleghenies, what would amount nowadays to a year's schooling served most men for life. Low wages? The top men were proud to tell how little *they* had hired out for when they started in! Long hours? Why, Lord A'mighty, how could you expect to get anywheres if you were afeared of work! Capital to start in business? They boasted of the sum that had set *them* on

the way—generally a hundred dollars was the sum, but some of them would tell of a famous fifty-cent piece—the first. Hard work had done the trick.

Work was their creed, their idol, the solution of every problem man might face. Their belief in it held to the day they died. At the height of their careers when they had grown rich beyond the most fantastic dreams of their youth, they labored on, working ten and twelve hours a day.

In *Giants Gone, Men Who Made Chicago*, Ernest Poole gives us a good idea of how these men were set fast in the work-habit. It was said of McCormick's attitude toward work, "He loved it, couldn't leave it alone," and he was on the job at seven every morning. When Pullman planned his city "he worked the architect like a horse," and he himself would work all day and often be back at it at night. To Marshall Field, "success was his religion," and he would sometimes work eighteen hours at a stretch. Armour was up every day at five, "He loved to work and see others work and cut out everything in life that could possibly interfere with their jobs." He is quoted as saying, "Whether he be rich or poor, there is no more vicious man than the one who is voluntarily idle . . . My advice to every young man is to find out quickly what he can do and then work till he is done living."

How could such men feel sympathy for those who asked for an eight-hour day?

Such men, judging life out of their own experience, would find it hard to comprehend that child labor, or hard work at low wages, or lack of capital with which to start, was anything in the way of hardship which an individual with any spunk to him couldn't surmount and be the better for the effort.

In addition, they were well aware of the contributions they had made, contributions which had brought enormous material benefits to all America. If they had performed these great tasks, was it not just that they be greatly rewarded? McCormick knew what his reaper had done for the grain prod-

uce of the country and how it had revolutionized farming. Armour boasted, "Through the wages I disburse and the provisions I supply, I give more people food than any man alive." Pullman was well aware that his name had become synonymous with comfortable railroad travel—and these were only a few who could say with honesty that they would leave the world in some way better than they found it.

The virtues which they prized—the capacity to work hard, ambition, courage, persistence, individual effort, initiative, invention—were values that we, as Americans, hold in particular respect, knowing how they have shaped our country, what great material advantages they have achieved and can still achieve.

But there were many things that those men at the top did not see, had not experienced, lacked the broad intelligence to understand. And these things were quite as important to the welfare of the nation as those virtues in which they took a righteous pride.

They would fail to understand—oh, so many things! That child labor in a store or factory or slum was incomparably worse than chores done out in the sun and the wind. That where the homely outdoor work, hard as it was, provided actual educational benefits as well as health ones—teaching muscular co-ordination, manipulative skill, and embracing a wholesome sense of responsibility and family integrity—the new confining, impersonal, mechanical labor, often among strangers, generally under unhealthy conditions, could be damaging and destructive, producing weakened bodies, dull minds, a sullen resentment.

They would fail to understand that many men who labored through the same daily length of hours as they did found themselves upon a treadmill, making no advance and winning only the barest livelihood. The top men would not understand how the work attitude was varied by the creative element or the lack of it. It is one thing to manipulate an enter-

prise and see it grow vast out of nothing. It is another thing to turn identical screws on a belt line myriad times a day. Energy varies according to the task performed. Some tasks a man could labor at for eighteen hours and quit, still joyful. Some tasks would leave a man spent of energy in less than half that time.

They would fail to see that low wages which held no promise of increase could be a kind of slavery. They would not understand that by the time they had reached middle years, ambitious young men, just starting out, would face frustration through the narrowing of opportunity.

And they would soon forget how equal had been competition when they rioted upward with little or no capital to start them on the way. In general, they would fail to understand the industrial revolution from *the under side*. They had ridden in on the top.

That they possessed a very special kind of ability and a genius for work, and that they represented some good fundamental concepts necessary to achievement, is undeniable. But these were not the men who would listen sympathetically to the complaints of labor. By them, the distress in the slums would be attributed to the vice of laziness. No-'count people lived in that filth and squalor because they were loafers, shiftless, didn't know any better, didn't deserve any better.

And now these creatures down at the bottom who had to get together in a mass to be the equal of a man, casting away the prized virtue of individuality, were going to tell *them*—the men on top—how to run *their* business? No, sir! There'd be shooting first.

There is yet one more thing to be said . . . Great men, great in one field or another—have again and again managed to surmount overwhelming obstacles. Chicago's strong boys may have been quite right in their assumption that anyone with "guts" could get ahead against all odds, but—

Humanity is not composed of strong boys. We are many

and various, and our talents are not equal, though for each and every one the door of opportunity must stay open. We cannot cast off the weak. We cannot ignore them. We cannot condemn them to an existence of suffering.

An individual cannot pretend to be other than he is without becoming either insane or neurotic. An individual must take honest stock of himself, admitting his weak points along with his strong, and despite many conflicting urges within himself, achieve a sense of wholeness in his personality. Just so must a healthy society acknowledge all the parts of which it is composed and, not pretending to be other than it is, achieve a sense of unity. Conflicts and differences will continue to arise, but they do not, cannot, sever any part of humanity. The attempt to lop off a section and to let it rot affects the health of the whole body of society. What we, the American people, are is the sum of all of us together, and we must go along together, the weak and the strong, whether we think we like it or not.

And, in a hard, aggressive, competitive world where the symbol of success is too often the dollar sign, we forget that there are other values. Some who are neither strong nor shrewd nor fitted for the hard-going nevertheless have gifts of worth, valuable to the community. The skillful craftsman who is no dynamo of energy may have a brooding grace which he imparts to his work, endowing it with enduring beauty. The slow-thinker, the dreamer, may have a quality of tenderness, of wisdom, to donate. The poor dullard may have a warmth of human cheer and friendliness that has its heartening wealth. The timid, the shy, the oversensitive, may have sweet music in their souls to make us glad; even the loafer and the fool may talk with God.

All of these little people, ruthlessly crushed down, can become wildly bitter and their passion roused into a vengeful hating. Such hate, en masse, can do more to put a shape to society than all the forging of the strong boys at the top, a shape we would not much admire. Hitler made use of just

that hate to build the fascist state that plunged the world in war.

We need strong men . . . But the strongest of these have always cherished the weak. They have felt their kinship with them, knowing the common humanity that unites us all. We, the American people, big and little, must go forward in one procession, with an honorable place for each and every one of us. That is the pattern of democracy.

Chapter Twelve

BLOOD ON THE BLACK ROAD



To what seemed incredible height

THE continuing depression, the repeated wage cuts, the unemployment, were causing labor unrest all over the country. Strikes were breaking out in one place and another. In Chicago, as elsewhere, these strikes were not organized. The act of striking predates that of labor organization. It is the impulsive reaction of men who feel themselves abused by their employers, and the act is ancient. Attempts to outlaw strikes have their origin in the Middle Ages, when in 1349, the Black Death caused a shortage of laborers and the con-

cept of compulsory work at fixed wages was introduced. So in Chicago and throughout the states, strikes flared up that had no instigation or direction by any labor leader. Leadership arose out of this mass surge of misery and protest, attempting to control and to direct it for the benefit of these sufferers into more concerted and orderly demands for justice.

Into the Chicago scene came Albert R. Parsons. He had run a newspaper in Texas in which he had spoken up for Negro rights. The Texans didn't like that, and they didn't want Mr. Parsons' paper. Parsons was told to "move on," to "get out of town." In Chicago, he became a typesetter for *The Chicago Times* and a member of the Typographical Union, the oldest union in the city. Soon he was in the thick of labor trouble, attending meetings, making speeches.

Labor organization was gaining headway. Men were joining the lodges of the Knights of Labor—some said at the rate of a hundred a week. The membership of the Workingmen's Party of the United States continued to swell.

In cheap little halls, shabby men crowded together, new members in a cause, their intent faces lifted to the speaker, eyes sharp and brows frowning as they considered the policies that they heard proposed and strove to make an estimate of which doctrine held most promise for them. Many and varying were the proposals, now uttered in the clipped terse words of a drawling Yankee, now poured out in a torrent of sputtering as some speaker strove against the impediment of a heavy foreign accent. Some speakers offered plans violent enough to suit the most savage feeling. Others based their concepts on American ideals and spoke with persuasive logic. German-born citizens who had read Marx spoke of socialism and the use of dynamite. Others maintained that democratic measures consistent with our plan of government were most effective.

Not all the violent talk was confined to the crowded stuffy little halls where the men kept an eye on the door, ready to move fast if the police broke in to wield their skull-

cracking clubs. The men at the top had their fierce spokesmen, too. According to Edgar Lee Masters, in *The Tale of Chicago*, "*The New York Times* advocated the indictment for conspiracy of every man who struck. *The New York Tribune* thought that the best policy would be to drive workmen into open mutiny against the law. *The Chicago Tribune* said, 'The simplest plan, probably, when one is not a member of the Humane Society, is to put arsenic in the supplies of food furnished the unemployed or the tramp' . . . *The Chicago Times* was giving the same counsel; and the president of the Pennsylvania Railroad said, 'Give them the rifle diet and see how they like that kind of bread.' "

In '76, the Workingmen's Party put up Albert Parsons as a candidate for alderman. Parsons failed to win, but the party was not downcast. To have succeeded in running a candidate at all was a big advance!

But progress was slow. When indignant workers, goaded by a further pay cut, walked out on strike, numberless men out of work made a rush for their jobs, and that made the strikers turn back and snatch at them, cuts or no cuts. Those who sought to organize labor redoubled their efforts to drive home the principles of unionism—the men *must* stick together. There must be no scabs. Those who went to the meetings understood, but they were still few in number. The large body of troubled labor continued to act on impulse, swept by its own emotion, now turbulent in a spirit of wild intention, now stagnant in a vast despair, scarcely aware of the small, insistent voices counseling amalgamation, combined, directed effort.

The punishing wage cuts went on. In '77, skilled tradesmen who had earned as much as \$7 a day before the depression were reduced to a wage of less than \$2 a day. Less skilled workers got 75¢ a day—when they worked. And that wouldn't feed a family.

Then came stirring news from Pennsylvania. The miners had struck—all of them. On top of that came word of trou-

ble on the Pennsylvania Railroad. No trains were running! Then more news—the strike was spreading to other railroads. Then word that the mines had closed down in Southern Illinois!

This information was carried in full by a struggling little newspaper not yet two years old. It was the first daily in Chicago to sell for a penny. Poor people could buy it. They could find out what was going on in the rest of the country.

Into the editor's office strode an impressive group of important businessmen, asking for the owner. They told the owner to suspend his paper for the time being. All this news was only stirring up trouble, agitating the people. It would be better if the people didn't know so much about what was going on.

Melville E. Stone, the owner, and Victor F. Lawson, the editor, did not agree with their callers. They had something to say about the freedom of the press and the duty of a newspaper, and they showed the committee to the door. *The Chicago Daily News* would go on giving the people of Chicago the facts, and if there was anything wrong with the facts, why, that was something somebody else ought to tend to!

A cut from \$65 a month to \$55—and another cut threatened! The switchmen on the Michigan Central threw down their tools, and the strike had moved into Chicago. Within a few hours not a train was rolling. The strike, starting in the East, had spread to the Mississippi.

Meetings grew to mass meetings. No disorder had broken out, but the air was tense.

The businessmen told the mayor what to do. Mayor Heath summoned Parsons. He told Parsons to stop talking, to clear out of town, go back where he came from. He warned, "Those Board of Trade men would as leave hang you to a lamp post as not."

Parsons did not take the "advice." He had urgent work to do in a hurry. Neither he nor any other organizer had

called this strike. It was of the wild, impulsive kind. Now Parsons and others like him were desperately trying to guide this sudden spout of energy. They wanted the men to keep cool, to use their heads, to turn the occasion into a demand for the eight-hour day, a twenty per cent raise in wages. They knew disorder and violence would only rouse public enmity against them. No, Parsons wasn't going to quit town. He wanted most earnestly to talk, to reason, to direct, to prevent violence.

He didn't get the chance. Police charged a mass meeting of 3,000 and broke it up with clubs and blank cartridges. Violence had been set in motion.

As though this had been the signal, strike after strike flared up like a spreading fire. The tailors went out, the lumbermen went out, the men at McCormick's. Along the black cinder path that led to the Reaper works mobs gathered to yell at the scabs who hadn't quit. Police charged them, and they fought back. Blood spilled on the "Black Road." Riot raged through Chicago.

Citizens feared for their lives. In the residential districts family men strode back and forth before their homes with loaded rifles in their hands. Others rushed to City Hall to offer guns and horses, to volunteer for law enforcement. Important business firms put their drays at the service of the police. Wildly, the strikers fought back, joined by the desperate groups of unemployed, of vagrants, hoodlums. Parsons' hope had gone down, trampled under their feet. The men at the bottom were not thinking now. They had ceased to use their heads.

The scene has been well described in *Chicago, the History of Its Reputation*: "Twenty thousand men, police and citizens, were under arms . . . Fifty different mobs were chasing militiamen and volunteer specials. On Randolph Street bridge the police fought with a mob. At the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy roundhouse on West 16th Street, locomotives were destroyed and volleys fired. A pitched

battle was fought at the viaduct between Halsted and Archer Avenues. Terror had the businessmen by the throats . . . they demanded 5,000 additional militiamen to put down 'the ragged Commune wretches.' "

Their demand was answered. Into Chicago marched two companies of regulars from the United States Army. The riot died. The strike was broken. Nothing had been gained but public hostility for the strikers.

When the casualties were counted, it was found no policeman had lost his life; some twenty-five or thirty-five lay dead, and they were mostly strikers and hoodlums.

The Daily News had something to say about where it placed the guilt. "For years the railroads of this country have been wholly run outside of the United States Constitution . . ." It went on to speak of lobbies in Washington working for railroad interests, corrupting Congress through enormous bribes, of fare and freight rates fixed as the railroads alone saw fit, of crooked speculation, plundering the people. "Finally, having found nothing more to get out of the stockholders and bondholders, they have commenced raiding not only the general public but their own employees . . . The people have no sympathy with the rioters, but they have as little with the Vanderbilts, the Jay Goulds, and the Jim Fiskes . . . The frightful evils we now endure were brought upon us by a course of legislation in the interest of capital and against industry . . . It is simply nonsense to say that there are not two sides to the question."

As Chicago cooled off, the three hundred rioters who had been jailed were released. Chicago thought they had been taught their lesson.

Perhaps the Great Fire had hardened the city. It certainly had not purified it. Crime continued on a large scale, and corruption filtered through city politics. In the erection of the new twin buildings, Courthouse and City Hall, completed in '85, a million dollars went astray. A search for it sent a local

politician on a trip to Canada, conveniently arranged by chums. But soon after, he was back, running a saloon and doing nicely, and no one thought to ask him any embarrassing questions. It was, in a way, only an incident . . .

But there were some men in Chicago who had an interest in building construction which was not stimulated by possibilities of graft . . . Men who loved buildings, knew every detail of their construction; men who dreamed of buildings, who sat long hours over plans, devising, creating, bringing skill, invention, imagination to their task.

Daniel H. Burnham was such a man, and he had a partner, John Wellborn Root, who was akin to him in spirit. These architects, partners since '73, were outstanding in a period which saw the development of a new era in building construction and gave to architecture another form, as distinctive as any of its historic predecessors.

Chicago's lack of bedrock was a problem to builders, for the soft clay foundation offered poor support for a heavy building. The invention of elevators had made it possible to build higher structures, and the cost of real estate had made it desirable, but this meant an increased load would rest upon a narrower foundation, and therefore be more than ever inclined to settle.

Root solved the problem with a unique idea. Steel rails were laid criss-cross, cement was poured upon them—and a solid foundation was obtained. This was called a "floating foundation," and it ably served its purpose until 1893 when two other architects, Adler and Sullivan, introduced the system of caissons.

Burnham and Root were the architects for the sixteen-story Monadnock Building which has been praised for its admirable simplicity of design, but it was the last of the old-fashioned buildings which they devised. Their next design would be different.

Construction had relied on cast-iron columns to carry a part

of the weight of the floors, but the rest of that load had been carried by the walls themselves. This did very well while buildings were low, but in taller ones it necessitated widening the walls to gain strength in support. The ground floor walls in the Monadnock Building are six feet thick.

Iron was now done away with. Steel was introduced. The slender steel skeleton carried the loads of floors and walls. Chicago had given to the world the secret of the skyscraper. This "skeleton construction," as it was called, could climb up, story upon story, to what then seemed incredible heights. This new structural idea would develop new outward forms. Architecture was headed for another era of design, representative of its period.

The Theater meant much to Chicagoans, and they had the best. What an occasion it was when "the divine Sarah" came! The event was heralded in the papers long before she arrived. People hurried to purchase seats weeks in advance, and with what thrilling anticipation they settled themselves in their places on the opening night to see this actress who was acclaimed the greatest of her day! It would go down on record—"Sarah Bernhardt was here in 1880," and a generation later people would talk fondly of the memory. But not of Bernhardt only. There would be many cherished impressions. Those Chicagoans had that true zest and admiration for the theater which stores up rewarding recollections which have their own beauty, like the afterglow of sunset. Patti would be remembered, long after '83, and Henry Irving and Ellen Terry, first seen in '85. The stage folk, sensitive to audience reactions, speaking of one city as "cold" and another as "warm," looked forward to a run in Chicago. Where they were so well received they gave their best.

Strange, with so many of Chicago's families hailing from New England, prominent and influential families too, that the Puritan strain seems to have effected so little influence upon the city. Rather than Puritan, Chicago, quite early,

developed something of a cosmopolitan air which she has maintained. Did those gay souls, the Beaubiens, right at the outset, introduce a lingering influence, life-loving, tolerant? Did those of foreign birth who managed to shoulder up and win a standing in Chicago's social life have anything to do with it—few as they were in those days? Did those settlers from the southern states bring some genial appreciation for the arts of fine living which, in all of Chicago's hustling, was not effaced?

However it came about, Chicagoans may be thankful that the dour harshness of the Puritan strain was not a keynote of their city. Violent as Chicago's story is, with its own dark and shameful episodes, the witch hanging spirit was, in comparison with other cities, scarcely felt at all. The Nativist movement in Chicago produced but minor skirmishes where in other sections it produced calamities of horror. For all her crime and lawlessness, for all her labor strife, Chicago retained some free and easy quality of tolerance and fairness in a period when few cities—or towns either—could say as much. There were no convent burnings, no Mormon murderings, no Klan ridings, to make ugly its history of civil liberties. It took the labor question to arouse Chicago's darker nature, as though the city said, "Do what you like and I shan't interfere, but when it comes to money-making—no!"

Yet, even in that long ugly struggle, there would be men who kept faith with democracy, who stood by labor and championed its rights.

Strangely enough, one of them was a man who loved luxury, was something of a dandy, moved in top circles, and was mayor of Chicago oftener than any other man before him. Many were the denunciations heaped upon the jovial 225-pound Carter H. Harrison. It was said that he was far too lenient with the sins of his city, that he let the town run "wide open," that he put no check on gambling, on the sale

of drink on Sabbath day. But, in his sentimental, easy-going fashion, Harrison loved the city—he had once said, “as though it were his bride.” He loved the people in it, and his love made no distinctions. It traveled right down the social scale to the humblest workmen. The people knew that, and the mayor’s popularity was real. He was no thinker. He would lead no valiant struggles. Greatness wasn’t in him, and his critics were right in what they said. Yet, simply, honestly, he believed in democratic rights and went on saying that went for workingmen, too. They had a right to organize. He wasn’t going to call in troops and let them shoot his people down.

The mayor reflected the changing temper of the times. After the passage of the Armed Workmen’s Law in ’79, a law which required all military organizations other than the state militia to be licensed by the government, the people in Chicago breathed easier. Militant labor organizations such as the Labor Guards, the Jaeger Verein, and the Bohemian Sharpshoots, which had been arming and drilling, were disbanded. Now that the menace of an armed insurrection had been eliminated, tolerance and even sympathy for the workmen colored public opinion. In ’83, a compulsory education law was passed, and though its enforcement was weak and sketchy, it was a step forward. Union strength gained. The Central Labor Union, organized in ’84, included carpenters, metal workers, butchers, lumber workers, hod carriers, and many others. The Knights of Labor, having conducted a series of successful minor railroad strikes, met in Chicago in May, ’84, and there the twenty-five delegates endorsed a general strike for the whole state for the purpose of winning the eight-hour day. The strike was to begin May 1, 1886.

Another element in the labor group was of a radical nature. Called the Black International, it was composed of a small but noisy group of anarchists.

The American brand of anarchy had always been a mild

sort of Utopian dream. When, after 1848, some anarchists fled from Europe to seek asylum in America, America admitted them without hesitation. She was proud to be the refuge of the persecuted in other lands. It did not occur to her that these men who had fought tyranny by violent means would ever think they had need to use these means in a country where the rights of free speech and free assembly were the law of the land.

The European form of anarchy was not the dreamy, harmless innocent that its American cousin was, and soon anarchy in America underwent a complete change under the influence of the imported form.

It is difficult to realize at this time that once the word "anarchy" carried no thrill of horror. It was what happened in Chicago that put that horror in the word which has lived on, effecting a few changes in our laws, including the one which put up the "Keep Out" sign to anarchists in the naturalization offices.

Parsons had joined the leaders of the anarchist group. Whether he felt that the progress of labor was not moving speedily enough, or whether he actually believed only revolution could right all labor's wrongs, there he was with the handful of men who advocated dynamite and gunpowder, editing a small paper, *The Alarm*, which proclaimed the anarchist theories.

The anarchist leaders were August Spies and Michael Schwab with their German-language newspaper, *The Arbeiter Zeitung*; Samuel Fielden, once an English weaver and afterwards a Methodist lay preacher and a teamster; Oscar Neebe, an organizer of the beer-wagon drivers; George Engel, a toymaker; Adolph Fischer, like Parsons, a typesetter, and Louis Lingg, an organizer of the Brotherhood of Carpenters.

It is hard to know what these men thought they were doing. They could scarcely have believed the country was ripe for revolution, and they must have been well aware of how small they were in number. Though there were more

anarchists in Chicago than in any other place, there were at most only 3,000 in the party out of a population of 850,000, and of these 3,000 few were active. The leaders shouted with ferocity at meetings—and only about fifty came to listen. They organized parades under red-and-black flags—and no tumult arose. Perhaps they thought their talk of dynamite had the kind of fight in it that would frighten the top men into granting better terms to labor. Perhaps they thought such talk would hasten the workingmen into massed, advancing ranks. What their talk actually accomplished was a recurring distrust of labor in the public mind and a spreading uneasiness as times grew bad and strikes broke out.

'84 saw another nation-wide depression which lasted on into '86—the year for which the general strike had been set. The depression brought its usual increase of suffering to the poor. Again wage cuts came and unemployment increased. McCormick had died in '84 and was succeeded by his son and brother. In '85, the Reaper works cut salaries, and the "Black Road" was again thronged with shouting, struggling men, fists flying and stones hurtling as strike-breakers walked in to fill the jobs. But though the mayor might declare that he would not bring in troops—there really was no reason why he should—Pinkerton men had been hired and served as a private army for the Reaper works. Yet, although they were confronted with a force they could not equal, the strikers won a settlement in their favor, gaining a 15 per cent increase, though not all of them were reinstated.

Strikes continued on during '85. The street-car men struck, and, in the mayor's opinion, "nine out of every ten citizens were with the strikers." After some minor skirmishes, the strikers won again.

'86 came in with a number of strikes accompanied by more or less disturbance. Often enough, it was the police who actually promoted disorder, descending upon peaceable meetings, breaking them up with clubs and brandished pis-

tols. Inspector John Bonfield came to be known and hated by the workingmen for his brutality and the zeal of his attacks.

May 1, 1886, arrived, and 58,000 workers quietly laid down their tools and walked out. There were no disturbances.

May 3, August Spies addressed a rally of striking lumbermen. The meeting was near the McCormick plant, and as Spies was concluding, a number of his listeners drifted over to the cinderpath to jeer at homeward-bound workers who had not gone out on strike, many of them being strikebreakers who had taken the strikers' jobs in the previous disturbance.

Suddenly, a detachment of police appeared. The remainder of Spies' audience started over to see what was going to happen.

Seeing the massed crowd moving toward them, the police evidently mistook the advance for an attack. They fired into the crowd, killing six and wounding many others.

No one was more infuriated at this act than Spies. In no time he was at the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* office printing a proclamation in English and German which was scattered through the city by a man on horseback. Under the heading "RE-VENGE," it read, "Your masters sent out their bloodhounds—the police. They killed six of your brothers at McCormick's this afternoon . . . If you are men, destroy this hideous monster that seeks to destroy you. To arms! We call you to arms!"

That night a meeting was called by the anarchist group in Grief's Hall, near Haymarket Square, and more of the proclamations were given out to the seventy or eighty who attended, and a large meeting was arranged for the following night to be held in the square itself at seven-thirty.

Next day, May 4, the *Arbeiter Zeitung* carried yet more furious appeals. Schwab wrote, "Dry your tears, ye poor and suffering. Take heart, ye braves. Rise in your might and level the existing robber rule in the dust."

That evening the gathering was big. Some say a thousand

came. Some say three thousand. Spies opened the meeting, and his subject was "Justice." Parsons followed him on the improvised platform which was a truck. And in the audience stood the mayor himself who had ordered the police to stay away. As the meeting went on and the evening light faded into night dark, the mayor kept lighting matches for his cigar. A friend along with him remonstrated. He was thus calling attention to himself. It was dangerous to do so. Carter Harrison answered, "I want the people to know their mayor is here."

After a while, he left the meeting and went over to the near-by Desplaines Street Police Station where the zealous Inspector Bonfield held a reserve force ready for action. The mayor reported that the meeting was peaceable and directed the inspector to disperse his force. He then returned to the meeting, listened a while longer, and went home.

The last speaker, Fielden, was on the platform. It had begun to rain. The crowd dwindled away, some three hundred still lingering. Parsons suggested to Fielden that the meeting be brought to a close. Fielden answered that he would soon be finished, and Parsons went home.

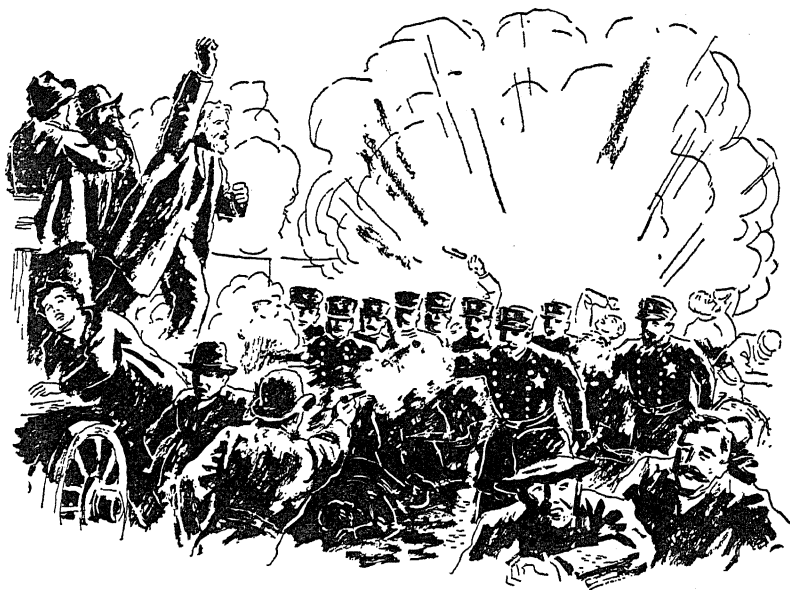
All at once, marching men came down the street. The crowd turned to see Inspector Bonfield heading a squad of more than a hundred police advancing into the square.

Bonfield commanded the meeting to disperse. Fielden jumped down from the truck at once and told the inspector that the meeting was peaceable.

Before anything else could be said or done, into the dark rainy street came a sudden terrible burst of light, sound and vibration, and policemen were falling, blown this way and that.

A bomb had been thrown.

Bonfield yelled the order, "Fire!" The maddened police, those who were left standing, fired in all directions into the shrieking, stumbling, running people. Lurching men,



They fired in all directions

caught by a bullet, were snatched at and dragged away. Men who fell managed to crawl off.

The bomb had killed one policeman outright, fatally wounded six others, injured fifty, some seriously.

Chicago was stunned and outraged. A bomb! One of those infernal machines you read about in far-off foreign countries!—and that it should be used in *America*, in *Chicago*! A cruel, blundering weapon that struck alike at intended victim and innocent passer-by! Horrified Chicagoans were sickened with disgust. A meeting of workingmen—and *this* was what they did. Why, at any moment, any place, death might be tossed into a street by these murderers!

Sympathy for labor vanished. Out of public horror, disgust and fear, a frenzy formed in which labor and all its works were damned.

For those who found this hatred helpful to their interests, this occasion was not one to pass by. The scare and frenzy were whipped up by the alleged discoveries of bombs and dynamite lairs all over the city, and the police and the newspapers kept the hysteria mounting. It did not matter at all, apparently, that nobody knew who threw the bomb, that the guilt of no man could be proved. It was enough that the anarchists had talked of dynamite and bombs. That *proved* they did it.

The anarchists were rounded up and jailed for trial. Parsons had escaped to a Wisconsin farm. There he fought some lone courageous battle in his own soul which brought him back to give himself up and stand trial along with his fellows.

If Chicago thought the bomb had brought disgrace upon her, she had no idea in those days of the shame she would bring upon herself by that trial, for it was little more than "lynch law" that masqueraded in the court. Misuse of the law is a far more serious offense than the most lawless act of a criminal, for it is a betrayal of the responsibility of government on which we all rely.

Within two weeks after the bombing, a hand-picked jury indicted the anarchists for murder. The trial began on June 21. It was known in advance which way the jury would vote. It was not proved who threw the bomb. The guilt of the men was not established. Although the evidence consumed weeks of time, the jury handed in their verdict within three hours. And the verdict was, as expected, guilty. Parsons, Spies, Schwab, Fischer, Fielden, Lingg and Engel were condemned to death. Only Neebe escaped with a fifteen-year sentence in the penitentiary.

The condemned men asked permission to address the court, and this was granted. The speeches were long and eloquent as these men sought for the last time to serve their cause by explaining what it was they had labored for and why it was they had chosen to be anarchists. With that

choice we who believe in democratic processes must disagree, but in much of what they said there was a consuming love for the downtrodden which makes these misguided men, victims of an unfair trial, the more pitiable.

Parsons said, "We plead for the little ones, we plead for the helpless, we plead for the oppressed, we seek redress for those who are wronged, we seek knowledge and intelligence for the ignorant, we seek liberty for the slave—we seek the welfare of every human being." Dynamite?—Yes, he believed in it. He went on to outline its virtues in terms of power for the lowly.

Fielden availed himself of the grandiloquent oratory of the period. "Today the beautiful autumn sun kisses with balmy breezes the cheek of every free man; I stand here never to bathe my head in its rays again. I have loved my fellow-man as I have loved myself. I have hated trickery, dishonesty and injustice . . ."

Lingg was most abrupt and bitter. "Anarchy is called disorder. Anarchy is opposition against the order of things which does not allow a man to live a life that is worth living. I die gladly upon the gallows in the sure hope that hundreds and thousands of people to whom I have spoken will now recognize and make use of dynamite. In this hope I despise you and despise your laws. Hang me for it."

Spies cried, "If you think that by hanging us you can stamp out the labor movement, then call your hangman. But you will tread upon sparks. Here and there, behind you, in front of you, and everywhere flames will spring up!"

The Chicago newspapers printed the speeches in full. They were reprinted in other newspapers throughout the country. If Chicago had wanted to advertise the cause of anarchy, she could not have done better. These men were speaking to a larger audience than any one of them had ever hoped for.

But, unintentional and unpremeditated as it certainly was, free speech on this occasion certainly proved again the wis-

dom of the policy of open, honest discussion. Brought out into the light, anarchy lost whatever appeal it may have had previously. Americans didn't want it. They had their own ways of doing things and they thought best to stick to them. That attitude was not based on antipathy to what was foreign *because* it was foreign. It was based primarily on a belief in the procedures of democracy as being more enlightened, more just, more suited to a free country, although there was an innate feeling that somehow a country had to work out its own solutions for its problems. You'd get all muddled up if you didn't think for yourself and went trying all kinds of recipes that maybe worked some place else where everything was different. An idea has to grow out of the people, be a part of their growth, rooted in their beliefs, suiting the climate, you might say, or its spirit would seem alien, a thing imposed. No, anarchy wasn't wanted.

While the men were waiting execution, many outstanding people, both in America and England, who had followed the trial and were convinced the whole procedure was a miscarriage of justice, sent petitions for clemency to the governor. Such petitions were signed by William Dean Howells; Lyman J. Gage, then president of the First National Bank of Chicago and afterward Secretary of the Treasury; Robert J. Ingersoll; General Roger A. Pryor; Clarence Darrow; William Morris of England, and others.

The governor commuted the sentences of Fielden and Schwab to life imprisonment but refused to do more, nor was the verdict set aside by the Supreme Court of the state.

Lingg killed himself in his cell. Parsons, Spies, Fischer and Engel were hanged in the county jail in November.

Mayor Harrison was troubled by the whole affair. He didn't believe the anarchists were guilty of the crime they died for. Oh, they had said a lot, but you can't hang a man

for saying things. Not in this country, and if you do, it's wrong, terribly wrong.

According to the story told in *Chicago, the History of Its Reputation*, a committee of important gentlemen called upon him. They wished to advise him that it might be best if free speech were suppressed.

"Up speaks 'the merchant prince,' Marshall Field himself; 'Mr. Harrison, we represent great interests in Chicago—'

"'Mr. Field,' the mayor interrupts, 'any poor man owning a single small cottage as his sole possession has the same interest in Chicago as the richest citizen.'"

Not all the rich and influential citizens, thank goodness, were represented by that committee. As a direct result of the Haymarket tragedy, Lyman J. Gage, the banker, founded the Civic Federation to promote free and open discussion of all controversial questions.

Perhaps it was remorse. Though labor remained under suspicion and its progress had suffered a grave setback, the reform spirit awoke. In 1889, there opened in Chicago a great humanitarian enterprise which would bring that city a world fame of which she could be truly proud. It was innovation and leadership on a new plane—

Hull House was founded. Jane Addams' noble work had begun in the slums of Halsted Street.

Chapter Thirteen

SMOKE AND STEEL



Everything went fast

PACE unslackened, Chicago rolled into the 1890's as the second largest city in the United States. Only fifty-three years old, she had surpassed every city but New York, and New York, Chicagoans pointed out, had a good headstart. Around the time that Point Du Sable built his lone house by the desolate lake shore, New York was the capital of this country. Chicago, with a population of 8,000 in 1837, had now gone beyond the wildest prophecy of her early days, achieving over a million and a half population.

This hustling young giant was not lovely to look at. The

heart of the city was covered with a dense fog of coal smoke that streamed from her many factories, her enormous mills, her profusion of railroad yards. One visitor, Giuseppe Giacosa, quoted in *As Others See Chicago*, said that looking at it, "the city seemed to smolder, a vast, unyielding conflagration, so much was it wrapped in smoke."

The buildings had taken on a soot-darkened, somber gray that was almost black, and that made them look older, uglier than they were. Into the city came the terminal lines of a network of local and continental railroads. Trains hemmed in the central business district, running to the west of it and along the lake shore to the east. The ceaseless, shunting engines puffed up their sooty, acrid-smelling smoke, and even on a sunny day there was no color in the sky. The tracks of these trains were not elevated, and there were many accidents at the street crossings.

Chicago had one elevated line—"The Alley L." The cars were pulled by steam engines which let off more smoke, and this right in the business district, the downtown stop being at Congress Street between Wabash and State.

It was not a quiet city. Outside of the puffing and bell-dinning and hooting of engines, there was the clanging and grinding of the cable cars that sped along the streets at a dangerous speed. New York might be content with horse-cars and a speed of six miles an hour, but Chicago's cars made nine miles in a congested area, thirteen in the less populated districts. It was no weakling's job to be a "Grip-man" on those cars. These predecessors of the motorman needed heft to handle the grips that clutched the underlying cables. They needed sturdy constitutions too, for in the coldest weather—and Chicago can be cold—they stood out in the open at the front of the car, bearlike figures in fur coats, earmuffs and heavy boots.

Added to the clanging, grinding clamor of the cars was the din of heavy drays, the squeak of axles, the crunching, groaning rattle of metal-shod wheels on granite-paved streets,

the ringing clatter of the horses' hoofs, the shouts of the drivers.

And everything went fast—even the people. They hurried along the pavements so that it was said if you asked a direction of one of them you had to run by his side to catch the answer. Dodging across busy streets, streaming with people, ducking wagons going at a clip, cable cars coming with a rush, the citizens dashed into their grim tall buildings and ran for elevators that shot them upward, floors whizzing by. They had express elevators even then. Some of those "wire-net" cages went straight up to the top floors without a stop. And the Masonic Building had been built, tallest in the world, twenty-two stories high.

The uproar and the hurry, the din and the bustle, the dark thronged streets below the lowering sky, and the permeating smells of smoke, of stockyard, of river stench, combined to give an impact of ugly violent commotion, that, while it gave offense to every esthetic taste, roared on with such a hum of energy as to inspire awe.

Chicago had long since become a topic for the world. Visitors came far to see this city as one of the sights of America, if not *the* sight, and they were variously thrilled, scandalized or denunciatory according to their outlook. Perhaps Chicago has been more written about than any other American city—I don't know, but I rather imagine that it has. Certainly there were a great number of visitors who felt moved to record their impressions.

"During my stay of one week," Giuseppe Giacosa says, "I did not see in Chicago anything but darkness, smoke, clouds, dirt and an extraordinary number of sad and grieved persons . . . The day of my arrival I saw rubbish—still smoking—from a house burned the night before. The day of my departure . . . I saw on this same site, the iron framework of a new building, already erected to the height of a third story and already the scaffolding of each story completed . . . The dominant characteristic of the exterior life of

Chicago is violence. Everything leads you to extreme expressions; dimensions, movements, noises, rumors, window displays, spectacles, ostentation, misery, activity and alcoholic degradation."

Mr. Kipling was downright rude about it. "Having seen it, I urgently desire never to see it again. It is inhabited by savages . . . I spent ten hours in that huge wilderness wandering through scores of miles of those terrible streets, and jostling some few hundred thousand of these terrible people who talk money through their noses . . . I listened to people who said that the mere fact of spiking down strips of iron to wood and getting a steam and iron thing to run along them was progress." Mr. Kipling spent some of those ten hours in a visit to the stockyards, of course, and there he saw a woman—"She stood in a patch of sunlight, the red blood under her shoes, the vivid carcasses tacked round her, a bullock bleeding its life away not six feet from her, and the death factory roaring all around her. She looked curiously, with hard, bold eyes and was not ashamed. Then I said: 'This is a special Sending. I have seen the city of Chicago!' And I went away."

Chicagoans would have to bear much of the same! Yet some, like the writer, Julian Ralph, quoted in *As Others See Chicago*, had a good word to say:

"Who would dream that—in Chicago, of all places—all talk of business is taboo in the homes, and that the men sink upon thick upholstery in the soft, shaded lights of silk-crowned lamps, amid lace work and bric-a-brac, and in the blessed atmosphere of music and gentle voices, all so soothing and so highly esteemed that it is there the custom for the men to gather accredited strangers and guests around them at home for the enjoyment of dinner, cigars and cards, rather than at the clubs and in the hotel lobbies . . . There is a wellspring of repose there . . . it is in the souls, the spirit of the women, and it is as notable a feature of the Chicago homes as of those of any American city. But the

women contribute more than this, for, from the polish of travel and trained minds, their leaders reflect those charms which find expression in good taste and manners, a love of art and literature and in the ability to discern what is best, and to distinguish merit and good breeding above mere wealth and pedigree . . . I do not believe that in any older American city we shall find women so anxious to be considered patrons of art and learning, or so forward in works of public improvement and governmental reform as well as of charity. Indeed, this seems to me quite a new character for the women of fashion . . .”

Beyond the intensely active center of the city, Chicago stretched away on three sides, and the different sections, broadly speaking, were beginning to take on the aspects they have today. To the west was a manufacturing area, railroad yards, slums, and some pleasant residential areas. Buildings did not go beyond Garfield Park. There the prairie started.

At the south, Hyde Park, though within the city and connected with the downtown district by train, was still something of a separate settlement, and neighborhoods that have since grown solidly together then had the look of scattered villages. At that time, visiting New Yorkers wondered at the inclusion of this semirural section within the city limits and deemed Chicago's forethought for her continued growth a folly, “ludicrous or pitiable.” Jackson Park was a flat and dismal stretch of swamp land, but further west, Washington Park was a scene of elegance and lively spirits, for here was the race track with its large grandstand. Parties drove out to spend the day, arriving in their victorias and landaus, dock-tailed horses stepping high, the ladies in bustles, the gentlemen in derbies, and much bright color and stir went on against the green trees and under the blue sky, for there were no belching smokestacks in this vicinity. The smokestacks began again further to the south, down by Mr. Pullman's model town. And way south along the lake shore were

the dunes that swelled in a great range of high hummocks, shifting slowly with the years, wild country and rarely visited, but interesting country to a botanist for its extraordinary variety of growth, including cacti and arctic moss and tulip trees and many other specimens not usually found together.

Although Prairie Avenue was still the street of mansions, the North Side was beginning to acquire some of its later magnificence. The Potter Palmer mansion had been erected on Lake Shore Drive in '82. In the main, the neighborhood that extended from the river to North Avenue was a section of comfortable, well-to-do homes, and by this time the trees had come back to line the streets and adorn the lawns, adding a charm to the neighborhood.

Further north were a number of communities edging the lake, and here flat land gave way to undulating country. Ravines ran down to the sandy shore, and bluffs rose looking out over the blue waters. Oak woods rambled over the hills. Wild flowers grew in the meadowlands and country roads wound from one village to the next. For charm and beauty in a gentle landscape one could not ask for more. Far out was Lake Forest, connected by train with Chicago. There were commuters even in those days who left the city for their rambling estates, and in this upstart city where the deer had once trod freely, there were now deer parks in the English manner.

To the south, and toward the city, lay Fort Sheridan, and then other communities, many of them old settlements, Winnetka, Wilmette, and quiet Evanston with its Northwestern University founded in 1851.

Many of the great cities which are on waterways, river or lake or ocean, have built in from them in such a way that a visitor is scarcely aware of the proximity of water. That is not true of Chicago. Save for one section—the West Side—the city fronts the lake. There, day by day, the changing beauty of that vast body of water can be enjoyed in all its moods, its serene cerulean aglitter on a calm summer day

with water lapping quietly along the shore, or the gray fury of its wintry storms piling the waves high, ridge upon ridge, white-topped, before they lose their battle with the oncoming ice masses.

But as the '90's opened, the center of the city looked across the tracks to see the lake. Grant Park had not yet been devised. Its predecessor, Lake Front Park, was narrow and bleak and had the Illinois Central tracks all too visible at its outer rim.

The oldtimers were passing. Men who could talk of the long ago days when wilderness pressed in upon a lonely, struggling little swamp town no one paid much heed to, and wolves came into the lanes at night, and the cries of the waterfowl broke a morning silence, and all the men in the place called each other by a first name.

Dying rich in a great industrial metropolis, many of these men showed the love for the city in which they had so long labored, leaving bequests indicating a wide range of interests.

Walter L. Newberry, whose name had gone down on the first appeal for a city charter, died in '68, worth four million. By '69, prolonged legal squabbles came to a settlement, and two million went to the founding of a library for the humanities. The Newberry Library is located on the site of one of two buildings on the North Side which escaped the Great Fire—the Mahlon Ogden residence.

William B. Ogden, first mayor of Chicago, died with so much money that he was well able to spread his bounty to the enrichment of a number of institutions. His will also was long in probate, but in '91, after fourteen years, Rush Medical School, the Academy of Sciences, the Astronomical Society, the University of Chicago, the Theological Seminary of the Northwestern University and the Chicago Women's Home all received generous allotments.

John Crerar died in 1890, one of the first of Chicago's railroad magnates. He left two million dollars for a scientific library, a hundred thousand dollars for a statue of Abraham Lincoln and thousands of dollars for charitable and religious institutions, not forgetting literary societies and The Chicago Historical Society.

Joseph F. Armour left a hundred thousand dollars. To this, his brother added ninety thousand for the establishment of the Armour Mission which developed into a manual training school for youngsters of both sexes.

And so it went as the wills were read.

Bequests by rich men to public institutions of one kind or another, made either during their lifetimes, or in their wills, is a rather common thing in America and in England. So much so that we do not stop to think that only in these two countries is it the custom for men of wealth to acknowledge a responsibility to public welfare and to give back to the community a sizable share of the money which they have amassed.

In 1861, there were only three millionaires in the whole country. The Chicago of the 90's would have thought itself poor to have so few. Among Chicago's millionaires were some who, if they had not come from wealthy families, had at least come from the well educated, but there were many who had shot up from society's lower levels, and who were deserving of the title, "nouveau riche." These were the ones, of course, who put on the most ostentatious displays, whose monstrous houses were architectural horrors stuffed with priceless art treasures purchased in Europe and valued for their cost alone. Their wives overdressed even in a day that went in for the lavish and the costly and the elaborate, and these were the ladies who kept Chicago society embarrassed, shocked or snickering, as one faux pas after another was added to the collection. And it was the gaudy tastes and extrava-

gant whims of these nouveau riche which went far to earn for Chicago her reputation of vulgarity.

So much we know by hearsay from our elders and by record, although it is a little difficult, looking back down the years, to see how, in that era of new wealth and lavish living, the vulgarians could have been so outstandingly conspicuous; for illiteracy and lack of discernment in taste, yes, but not in the matter of rich living! Respected and cultured families, with only the slight exception of the more conservative, lived like wealthy English nobility, with those deer parks and the tiaras and all the other fancy trimmings.

For the opening of the Auditorium in 1892, all of Chicago society turned out in full regalia, bedecked and bejeweled. This was an enormous building unit, combining opera house, hotel and office building. It was the work of the architects, Sullivan and Adler. They had not yet devised the caisson system as a foundation, and its weight, resting upon the "floating construction" devised by Burnham and Root, is said to have caused Louis Sullivan persistent nightmares from which he woke convinced the whole enormous building had gone down, disappearing under the mud. Despite his worries, the building stood solid and won wide admiration for the skill and beauty and grandeur of its design. Electric light, introduced into the city in 1880, glittered over the brilliant assembly on that opening night. For the event, President Harrison, Vice-President Morton and Governor Fifer were present, and Adelina Patti sang. Diamonds glittered on neck and wrist and hand, on tiaras and stomachers. Ropes of pearls looped and swung over bared shoulders. Plumes swayed in elaborate coiffures, and many-hued shining satins and velvets swept the corridors. It was an occasion memorable in a city where brilliant social functions were a part of its active life.

But though the ladies might import their gowns from Paris or London or spend hours at fittings, a change had come in feminine apparel. Clothes were less cumbersome, granting



Society turned out in full regalia

a greater freedom of movement. Americans were becoming conscious of the enjoyment of exercise. Ladies who had played croquet in hoop skirts were now playing lawn tennis. Baseball, introduced some years before, grew in popularity, and the Chicago White Stockings were enthusiastically cheered. The summer resort had become an institution, and boating and bathing and picnicking were welcomed with delight by both sexes.

If it is true that the conquerors of a country gradually take on the characteristics of the conquered, Americans would seem to prove it, for they are turning more and more to an outdoor life in the woods and countryside, welcoming a good tanning by the sun, enjoying a trip by canoe, and adopting a number of the customs of those original Americans, the Indians.

Equality between the sexes was another Chicago characteristic commented on by the visitors from afar who came

to study these "savages" in their habitat and give to the world yet another report of Chicago doings. Julian Ralph, quoted in *As Others See Chicago*, was somewhat dazed by this aspect: "I have seen a thing in Chicago—and have seen it several more times than once—that I never heard of anywhere else, and that looked a little awkward at first, for a few moments. I refer to a peculiar freedom . . . between sexes after a dinner . . . a camaraderie and perfect accord between the men and the women. In saying this, I refer to very nice matrons and maidens in very nice social circles who have nevertheless stayed after the coffee, and have taken part in the flow of fun which such a time begets, quite as if they liked it and had a right to."

Chicago produced no Susan B. Anthony, struggling for recognition of the equal rights of women. Chicago women did not experience the many humiliations, big and little, inflicted upon their eastern sisters. These women, closer to the frontier, retained that normal equality, that recognition of their capability, which came down from the days of man and woman partnership against the wilderness. Of course they had a right to join in the talk over the coffee! The Easterners might think that odd, no one in Chicago did.

And now Illinois was to have the first governor to appoint women on important public boards. This governor, who took office in 1892, was a man whose services stand out big in the annals of democracy.

John P. Altgeld was one of those men who prove the value gained by all of us when the lowly and obscure can make their way through that door of opportunity our democratic belief keeps open to all comers. He proves again that out of the most ignorant and depressed class of people can come high ability of a noble order. And yet again, he proves the falsity of that line of lingering prejudice which would declare itself against the foreign-born.

Altgeld was the son of poor and ignorant German peasants.

They emigrated to America and took up farming when he was a year old. His boyhood was one of extreme hardship and poverty. His dull, brutish parents beat him and kept him at hard labor and opposed his wish for education that sprang from God knows where. But somehow the boy gained knowledge, borrowing books wherever he could, reading everything he could lay hands on, history, biography, poetry, philosophy, in the winter evenings when the farm work fell slack.

In '64, at the age of seventeen, he joined the Union Army as a substitute for a conscripted gentleman who, as was then permitted, paid a hundred dollars to the man who took his place in the ranks. Of this, ninety dollars went to Altgeld senior, ten to the son. After the war, John Altgeld somehow managed to obtain a year of study at a private academy which possessed some local standing, and from this became a school teacher, studying law in his spare time. With obstinate persistence, he held to the upward struggle, and in 1875 he came to Chicago with the traditional one hundred dollars in his pocket. In Chicago, he continued with the law, invested in real estate, became rich, took an active part in politics, and was elected Judge of the Supreme Court. Now, in 1892, he had become governor of Illinois.

But Altgeld, having come up the hard way, did not fall in with the talk of the strong boys who said that anyone could do the trick if they had guts. He was one of the strong who cherished the weak. He thought poverty a poor tonic that killed more patients than it cured, and for the evils which beset the poor, the helpless and the faulty, he had no patience. As governor, he set about correcting them, working with vigor and intelligence.

Prior to '91, practically no factory legislation existed. In that year, a law was enacted forbidding the employment of children under thirteen years of age, but like the previous compulsory education law, it was not enforced. Altgeld appointed Mrs. Florence Kelly, who had worked with Jane

Addams in the settlement house among the poor on Halsted Street, to see that the law was enforced, and she did so.

In Judge William H. Holly's brochure on Altgeld, *A Forgotten Governor*, this incident is given: "In a personal letter to Waldo Brown, Altgeld's biographer, Jane Addams tells of a prominent businessman who called on Altgeld and informed him that he and his associates were closing a large factory and putting over the door this sign, 'Closed because of pernicious legislation in Illinois,' to which Altgeld replied that he was quite willing the factory be closed if he could change the legend to read, 'Closed in the interests of the children of Illinois.'"

Altgeld proposed and secured enactment of an anti-sweat shop law, and a statute for the eight-hour day for women. In every state institution where women or children were confined, he required that a woman physician be appointed to the staff.

In prison reform he equaled the thought of today. During his tenure of office the parole system was instituted and the evils of the contract labor system abolished. He did not believe harsh treatment bettered a man. He said, "In the entire history of the human race there is not a single instance in which cruelty effected a genuine reformation. It can crush but it cannot improve. It can restrain but as soon as the restraint is removed the subject is worse than before."

Always interested in education, among other similar works he urged and secured increased appropriation for the state university.

Altgeld advanced and procured a bill providing for a commission of mediation to serve when strikes arose, to investigate the facts and make a public report.

These are some of the things this man did. Yet within a year after he had taken office he would face such a storm of abuse that the epithet one Chicago paper hurled at him of "Viper Altgeld" would, by comparison, sound mild.

Years later, a fine poet, speaking with the voice of Illinois, would chant his elegy.

The University of Chicago had been one institution which, languishing after the Great Fire, had not managed to get back into the current of the city's growth. Lagging behind, it had lapsed sadly until finally its educational program was abandoned.

William Rainey Harper was professor of Hebrew in the Baptist institution at Morgan Park. John D. Rockefeller was a patron of this theological school. In 1888, Harper met Rockefeller and into their conversation came mention of the misfortunes of the university. Rockefeller, moving with what appears to have been elephantine caution, indicated that he might be interested in assisting an educational institution in Chicago. There were, however, provisos, it developed. Rockefeller was willing to donate \$600,000 toward an endowment fund if \$400,000 more were pledged by philanthropists whose merit was judged satisfactory to himself and to the Board of the American Baptist Society.

Appeals were made. The Baptists responded with \$200,000. Marshall Field gave one block and a half of empty lots, grass-grown and can-strewn, down on the unpopulated Midway, and made a sale of another block and a half at \$132,500. The Jews of the Standard Club of Chicago gave \$250,000 with apparently no strings attached, no profit or glory accruing. The merit of the givers having apparently satisfied Mr. Rockefeller and the Board, the University renewed its existence. Money from the Ogden estate went into it, founding the Ogden Graduate School. Then Field gave another lot and held out another goal. He would give \$100,000 if \$1,000,000 could be raised. Silas Cobb gave \$150,000 for the building of Cobb Hall. La Verne W. Noyes gave \$500,000 to build a hall in memory of his wife, and then gave \$1,000,000 outright for a scholarship endowment. Julius Rosenwald,

manager for Sears Roebuck, tossed in \$500,000. C. K. G. Billings and his brothers gave \$1,000,000 for the Albert M. Billings Memorial Hospital, and by now Rockefeller had really opened up and was giving prodigally—\$10,000,000 in one lump.

The University of Chicago was back in the current of Chicago's forward flow, and its new buildings shot up with such speed that on ground broken in '91, the doors were opened to students in '92. Appropriate exercises were conducted by President Harper including the hymn, "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow." Along the Midway, the buildings in English Gothic style continued to rise, and the University was on its way, with what the Federal Writers called "the most auspicious program in university history."

But it was not their new university that so much occupied the thought of the Chicagoans at that time. Something far more exciting to the general public was in the air.

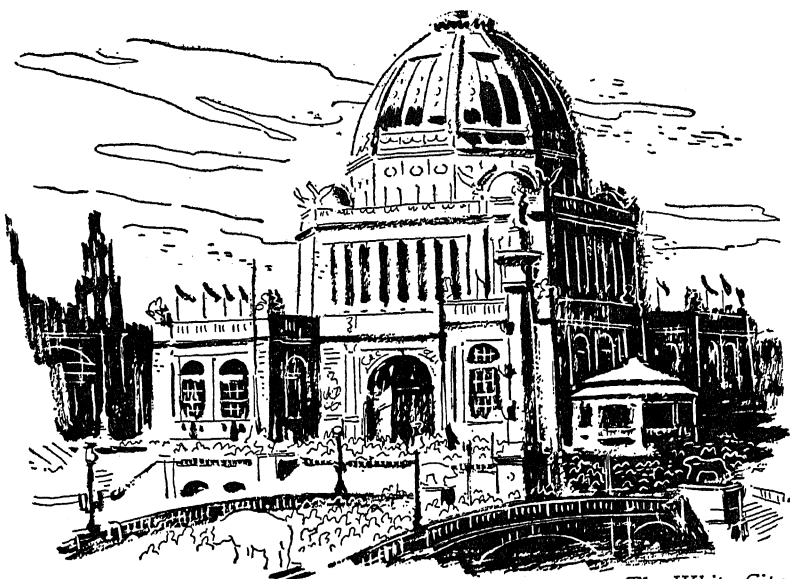
Four hundred years had passed since Columbus' discovery of America, and the idea of celebrating that event with a fair on an appropriate scale was being discussed in Congress. It would be called the Columbian Exposition. But in what city would such a fair be held?

Chicago, of course! The boosters pressed their claims. Chicago was the very place for it—a city centrally located, almost equally accessible to citizens of every state—a city composed of so many people from the various lands who had helped build America—a city with the enterprise to carry off so vast an undertaking—yes, and the money, too! Chicago backed her claims with a substantial sum for the venture and won out.

The great Columbian Exposition to which the whole world would be invited would be held in Chicago.

Chapter Fourteen

THE PENDULUM SWINGS



The White City

TO THE curious who wandered out in 1891 to look over the site which had been selected for the fair, even keeping Chicago's reputation for speed and energy in mind, the prospect looked poor. The Jackson Park area, you recall, was a gloomy waste of swamp land lying to the south of the city, lacking in natural beauty and completely undeveloped. To be sure, it bordered the lake front, but the sandy soil was forbidding to the thought of landscape gardening. Visitors shook their heads. If "Porkopolis" thought anything could be done with *that* . . .

But Burnham, the architect, was put in charge. He has stated his creed: "Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble and logical diagram once recorded will never die, but long after we are gone will be a living thing, asserting itself with growing intensity. Remember that our sons and grandsons are going to do things that would stagger us. Let your watchword be 'order' and your beacon 'beauty.'"

Burnham summoned to the work the foremost architects, sculptors and artists in America. There would be no little plans. He laid before them the vision of what might come to pass. Here was opportunity to create that unrestricted beauty of which every one of them had dreamed. They caught the fire and magnitude of his conception and were swept into enthusiasm.

St. Gaudens was there and Daniel Chester French, McMonnies, Paul Bartlett, Karl Bitter—and a Chicago man among the sculptors—Lorado Taft. Frank D. Millet was Director of Color. The architects were many. New York was represented by Richard W. Hunt; McKim, Mead and White; George B. Post. From Boston came Peabody and Stearns. Kansas City contributed Van Brant and Howe. But Chicago firms predominated—Jennie and Mundia, Henry Ives Cobb, S. S. Beman, Adler and Sullivan, Burling and Whitehouse and the then little-known Charles B. Atwood.

Sitting in conference, a spirit of co-operation developed, enthusiasm rising as suggestions were put forward and the thing took shape. The buildings would be classical, the proportions of each harmonious to the whole . . . all white against the blue of the lake, the blue of the sky . . . There would be lagoons . . . reflections, fountains . . . At night the new wonder of electric lighting would bring out the vast white outlines, the sparkling tumble of water . . . A symphony orchestra would play, Beethoven, Bach . . . Forums would be held, representative of the best thought of

the day on a wide range of topics . . . And the picturesque, the distinctive, the native charm of every culture of the world would have its corner.

In peace and in prosperity, all the nations of the earth would display their gifts, and all the abundant progress of every art and science and industry of man's devising as the nineteenth century drew to a close would be revealed. It would be the great flowering of an epoch.

"Aim high in hope and work . . ."

Starting in '91, the work drove on, winter and summer, in good weather and bad. Frederick Olmstead, the famed landscape gardener, coped with the swamp. The acquisition of his talents was made possible through the generous zeal of a Chicago-lover and a member of the World's Fair Board. James W. Ellsworth is reported to have told Olmstead, "You can have fifteen million and a free hand." Olmstead rewarded that generous spirit by devising a park which has lasted on in beauty into the present.

The sloughs were filled in, the earth was covered with good soil, the lagoons were scooped out, the islands were fashioned, the foliage was set, the buildings rose, the sculpture took form. Through winter snows and against frozen ground, in the slushy mire of rainy weather, in the sweltering heat of summer, the droves of workmen labored without ceasing in the welter of an incredibly vast undertaking, an extensive and complex ingenuity, overseen by men outstanding in their fields.

Putting up a city in a hurry was nothing new to Chicago. But this was "the White City"—a city dedicated to the best man had produced before the twentieth century began.

While the work at the fair grounds went on, Chicago brushed up to receive her guests. The Illinois Central tracks were lowered and covered over at what is now Grant Park, thus giving the center of the city a better view of the lake.

Elsewhere, tracks were raised, and the thundering trains passed over viaducts. New hotels were erected, some, like the Windermere, adjoining the fair grounds.

Another project was underway for Chicago's betterment, though this was unrelated to the Exposition. That backward-flowing river, it must be admitted, was weak in current, and the canal far from adequate. Work was started on the new Sanitary and Ship Canal to do the job more efficiently. It was an undertaking which would not be completed until 1900, but it would then be a broad channel, twenty feet deep and twenty-eight miles long, serving the triple purpose of drainage canal, boat route and, by a generating plant at Lockport, providing electric current for the city's lights.

The choice of a mayor coming up at this time was happily settled by the return to office of that popular figure, Carter H. Harrison. What if his critics were right in saying he was too lenient, too easygoing? Such a genial temper suited the holiday spirit of a town with a fair! And Harrison was honest and well liked. People hearing who Chicago's mayor was to be would know their host would not be overzealous when it came to Sunday closings, and Chicagoans thought that was just as well, too. People coming from a long way off had a right to enjoy every minute of the excursion.

That Columbian Exposition. . . .

A half century later people would still talk of it, and by then many would have seen other fairs, would know better what it was that Chicago fair had held. One thing is sure—that Exposition awoke a large section of the American people to an awareness of beauty which came with the impact of revelation.

"Chicago ought never to be mentioned as 'Porkopolis' without a similar reference to the fact that it was also the creator of the White City, with its Court of Honor, perhaps the most flawless and fairylike creation, on a large scale, of man's invention. We expected that America would produce

the largest, most costly and most gorgeous of all international exhibitions; but who expected that she would produce anything so inexpressibly poetic, chaste and restrained, such an absolutely refined and soul-satisfying picture as the Court of Honor, with its lagoons and gondolas, its white marble steps and balustrades, its varied yet harmonious buildings, its colonnaded vista of the great lake, its impressive fountain, its fairylike outlining after dark by the gems of electricity, its spacious and well-modulated proportions which made the largest crowd in it but an unobtrusive detail, its air of spontaneity and inevitableness which suggested nature itself rather than art," says James Fullarton Muirhead in *As Others See Chicago*.

"At night the fairy Venice presents a marvelous spectacle, more especially near the Columbian Fountain . . . you see toward the east showers of pearls, diamonds, rubies and emeralds of light, dark and mixed colors, gushing forth from the two electric fountains; the searchlights dancing here and there; gondolas and electric boats gliding slowly and silently over the dimpling waters of the canal whose banks are ablaze with light; toward the west, you see the dome of the Administration Building whereon bright stars hold their conference in set rows," Mulji Devji Vedant tells us in *As Others See Chicago*.

Theodore Dreiser wrote, "All at once and out of nothing in this dingy city . . . which but a few years before had been a wilderness of wet grass and mud flats . . . had now been reared this vast and harmonious collection of perfectly constructed and showy buildings, containing, in their delightful interiors, the artistic, mechanical and scientific achievements of the world."

There was so much to see, and such a wide variety of sights that people came again and again all through that summer, wandering from one exhibit to another, now awed, now merry, delighted and amazed by the evidence of man's swift advance in invention, uplifted by the stimulation of

ideas, wonder-struck by the sheer beauty of the fine statues and gracious architecture.

Chicagoans of foreign birth (and they were now 68 per cent of the population) could take pride also in the way the countries from which they had come were represented. It showed the native folk that even if they had come empty-handed, there was a rich inheritance behind them. The Norwegian and Swedish houses, the German building, the Irish Village—these were sights to see! Even those who had been least assimilated, the least known, and they were the Chinese, were now shown to be something more than a nation of laundrymen. Chicagoans, who in their ignorance, had always walked fast through Clark Street south of Jackson—then the Chinatown—would begin to think there might be more to these queer fellows than all the fearsome talk of opium dens and Tong wars made out. It would be some time before the chop suey restaurants became an institution, some time before Americans would dare to venture into them, but the Fair helped. China had its corner, its tea house, and its ancient and distinctive culture was on display.

Indians again! There they were, back on Chicago soil—part of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show at the Coliseum. Also, it was shown how nicely they were being taken care of, though the comments of the East Indian visitor, Mulji Devji Vedant, leave one wondering . . .

"When the secretary of the Institution was pointing out to me the change effected in Indian boys and girls, her eyes were beaming with internal joy. Their training, before extinction, includes practical lessons in self-government."

A building devoted to the progress of women thus showed one of the major advances made by the reform spirit, and to the Fair as a part of its Forum program came those pioneers who had so long struggled for the equal rights of women, Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. The realm of "principles and ideas" was well included, for leaders of

thought in religion, legislation, literature and science were invited to attend and state their views.

It gives us a further insight into the scope of that Fair to know that a Chicago poet, Harriet Monroe, whose name would long resound as a pioneer in this art, was commissioned to compose and to recite a dedicatory poem, and that Theodore Thomas and his symphony orchestra were a part of the program.

With all the good planning, luck entered dramatically in one instance and wrought enduring beauty. The design of the Art Palace had been entrusted to a renowned architect. Upon his illness, a little-known architect hastily submitted a plan of his own. Charles B. Atwood, the little known, was so modest, so quiet a man, that Burnham had almost overlooked him. Yet it was Atwood's building which was of such outstanding beauty that it alone of all the major buildings has lived on. None of the structures had been built for permanence. Many were wrecked when the Fair came to an end and nearly all of those left standing were carelessly destroyed by fire soon after, but the Art Palace escaped. Through the endowment of Marshall Field, it was for long preserved as the Field Museum, but as its plaster crumbled, it lapsed into ruin. From this gradual destruction it was rescued by the generous endowment of Julius Rosenwald. The crumbling plaster was done away with, the building was given a solid and enduring exterior, and it now stands in all its grace of classic beauty, the sole survivor of those great architectural achievements. Until 1925, the German Building had also managed to survive, but then it, too, was destroyed by fire.

Fire seems to haunt Chicago. The mockery of Max Beerbohm in *More* is not undeserved: "Americans, as yet inferior to us in the appreciation of most fair things, are far more spirited than we are about fires. Many years ago, when all Chicago was afire, the mayor, watching it from the lakeside, exclaimed in a loud voice, 'Who will say now that ours is

not the finest city in all the world?' I remember, too, that some years ago, on the eve of my departure from Chicago, a certain citizen, who was entertaining me at supper, expressed his great regret that they had not been able to show me one of their fires. And indeed it must be splendid to see those twenty-three-story buildings come crashing down in less time than was required to build them up. In Chicago, extinction is not attempted. Little value is set on bricks and mortar. A fire is enjoyed; then the building is reproduced and burned down again at leisure."

One tragic fire broke out on the grounds while the Fair was in progress and was witnessed by 130,000 people. Seventeen firemen, ascending a pinnacle, were cut off by flames and leapt to their death.

The importance of any event is determined by the degree of influence it effects, and of the influence of that Fair there can be no doubt. Art had been brought to the people, and from then on there was a general improvement in architecture. Even small Town Halls were more likely to be built with some thought of style, and taste became a part of civic pride.

But of how far that influence traveled, what works sprang up that were but a continuation of that experience, no one can say. We only know that even today an old man's eyes can light up with the memory of it, and a white-haired lady will take pleasure in bringing out the photographs.

But the photographs cannot tell the story, for they cannot tell us what those people, standing before the fresh, newly seen beauty, felt. That essence was a part of an age that has gone.

The '90's . . . The Victorian Era . . . With all the vast realms of darkness, ignorance and suffering which we know were existent then, and with so much which has since seemed quaint, absurd—the astonishing little stuffinesses and the bus-

ties and the corsets, the derbies and the handle-bar mustaches—yet, seen in retrospect and in comparison, what a golden age it was! So fraught with hope, so happy in its progress, so innocent of what the new century could bring in the way of wars such as mankind in all its history had never known!

They enjoyed their Fair—deeply. It thrilled them with wonder and delight.

Chicago had done the job nobly.

The skies were darkening for another spell of bad times. They had been since the very day the Fair opened, but with the Exposition going on, Chicago had managed to postpone impending trouble. Now, in October, the White City was about to close.

Mayor Carter H. Harrison came home late on the night of October 28, and sat a while musing contentedly. His city had done well, and he loved her all the better for it. That evening he had addressed a convention of mayors . . . "Genius is but audacity and the audacity of Chicago has chosen a star. . . . To be mayor of such a city!

The doorbell rang. He rose to answer it himself, the hour being late. Walking down the hall, vigorous at sixty-nine, his engagement to a young lady who would be his third wife but recently announced, how could he know that in this city that he loved, where he rode horseback through the streets in all neighborhoods, stopping to talk with this one or that, a merchant or a ragged child, a pushcart vendor—how could this genial, honest, easygoing man know that he was walking to his death?

The door swung wide. A man stepped in with a gun—a fanatic who nursed a grievance, thinking *he* should be the corporation counsel of the city. He fired three shots . . .

They mourned their mayor. Round his bier at City Hall the masses streamed, grief-smitten. With him, the Fair died, gloom cast over its closing.

Taking office as governor, Altgeld found a petition awaiting him for the pardon of the three anarchists who had been sentenced to life imprisonment. It bore 60,000 names, and the first name down on the list was that of Lyman J. Gage, the altruistic banker. Clarence Darrow, a friend of Altgeld's, advised him to act speedily in this affair of mercy. Everyone was, by now, convinced that the anarchists had been unjustly condemned.

But Altgeld was not the man to act in obedience to public whim, good or bad. He proceeded to investigate the records of that trial himself, and months went by. Then, in '93, he granted the three remaining anarchists full pardon.

But in doing so, he made public his findings, revealing all the crookedness which had gone on in that trial. He condemned everyone who had been at fault, including the judge. Unquestionably, his clear purpose was to bring to light these instances of legal backsliding with the hope of preventing any repetition of them in any future case.

But his delay in granting the pardon had permitted the wave of public feeling to die down, and now the sentiment which, one may believe would have approved the pardon had it been quietly granted, rose against him for the exposé. People did not want it said in plain English that their courts, their judges, could be crooked.

Altgeld had known what the result of his action would be. When Darrow had urged the pardon, he replied, "I will do what I think right. But don't deceive yourself. If I conclude to pardon these men, it will not mean the approval you expect. From that day I will be a dead man."

So now he faced the storm with quiet bravery, prepared to weather any blasts, but to bear onward, continuing the battle for the things he believed in. And for that, darker storm clouds would gather.

The depression increased. In the United States, 3,000,000 were unemployed. As winter came on and the raw icy winds

blew through Chicago's streets, the suffering of the poor was intense and plain to see. Evicted families sought the police stations for refuge, piling into the cells to sleep in a massed heap of misery. They came every night in wretched troops to sleep upon the stone floors, the stairways of the City Hall. In the crowded tenements, families doubled up. Children were put out in the streets. There wasn't room for them. Homeless, ragged little newsboys stole into lofts and curled up in a corner for the night. Babies were thrust on the over-filled orphanages or left abandoned. The County Poorhouse was crammed. Beggars shifted and huddled along the streets, hugging the walls, the doorways for shelter. Along Canal and West Madison job-seekers flooded the 15¢ rooming houses. To the unemployed of Chicago were added the unemployed who strayed in from other stricken towns and cities, hoping for a better chance in the bigger city. And some were a residue of left-overs from the workers the Fair had brought in.

At sight of such misery the city was smitten and appalled. Many and various tried to give help. Saloonkeepers handed out free lunches to the starving. In the spacious saloons of "Hinky Dink" Kenna, hundreds found food and shelter. Aldermen tried to look after "their" people, distributing food and clothing and coal. At Hull House, Jane Addams and her helpers struggled to keep families together. Wealthy men gave large donations of food, their wives helped to distribute it. Well-to-do merchants took over vacant stores and opened soup kitchens, and these depots were scattered through the city. A large one near the lake shore fed 4,000 a day.

What else could be done? Always, in the old days, in the little towns, the respectable poor had turned to the well-to-do in times of disaster, and always the well-to-do had recognized the obligation of charitable works. Even as late in the century as the time of the Great Fire many of the work people had applied, quite naturally, to their own employers for help.

But it was one thing for a man who ran a little shop, a little mill, employing a handful of men, to give aid to his helpers at a bad time. It was another matter when the little mill had grown to a great plant and the workers numbered thousands.

The new industrialism had put the whole thing on a different scale. . . .

Also, the personal contact between employer and employee had very largely disappeared; a human relationship had been lost. That made a difference. Just as many a person would not eat meat if he had to do his own slaughtering, so we may believe many a man who could order a wage cut or a program of dismissal when he was dealing with impersonal thousands might have thought twice about it if he stood face to face with the men and knew their names and the lives they led, and knew also what his edict meant to them in terms of human suffering.

But when it's only a matter of pushing a button . . .

Mr. Pullman pushed the button. The depression was not over in '94 when he cut wages.

A committee of employees went to the management to protest the cut. The committee members were dismissed from Mr. Pullman's employ. Then Mr. Pullman's workers struck.

"This quiet, negative way of dealing with things is part of Mr. Pullman's system. He mixes very little with his men, and never concerns himself about their private affairs. The duties of management to which he must attend leave him little time for details, and the love of independence which overpowers every other sentiment in the American, would not make the workers take kindly to such protection. When there is any ill-feeling between them, he simply waits till it disappears," Paul D. Rousiers tells us in *As Others See Chicago*.

This favorable report on Mr. Pullman's quiet, negative way of doing things did not set them in the same light as re-

ports received by Governor Altgeld. He had heard that there was suffering in the model town Mr. Pullman had built for his workers. Then he received an appeal from the dwellers in that town. A committee of them told the governor that 1,600 families were in want. Mr. Pullman had cut wages, but he had not cut rents. The workers could not pay rents, and they could not pull out of Mr. Pullman's model town.

Altgeld wrote to the magnate. Unless something was done it would be necessary to call the Illinois Assembly into special session. His letter was not answered, but an official of the Pullman company offered to take the governor on a tour of the model town. Patiently, Altgeld lent himself to the sightseeing idea, but he was not impressed. He wrote again to Mr. Pullman. "If you had shut down your works last fall when you say business was poor, you would not have expected to get any rent. Now while a dollar is a large sum to those people, all the rent now due you is a comparatively small matter to you. If you would cancel all rent due to October 1, you would be as well off as if you had shut down. This would enable those at work to meet their most pressing wants."

In his quiet, negative way, Mr. Pullman did nothing.

Altgeld wrote a third time. "It is not my business to fix the moral responsibility in this case. There are 6,000 people suffering for the want of food, they were your employees, four-fifths of them are women and children, some of these people have worked for you for more than twelve years. I assumed that even if they were wrong and had been foolish, you would not be willing to see them perish."

But nothing came of that.

Altgeld then looked into the affairs of the Pullman company. He found that in this enormously wealthy corporation all was not quite as it should be. Among other items, he discovered that its property was assessed at \$1,695,500 when it should have been \$12,360,000, and he called this item to the

attention of the State Board of Equalization which had to do with such matters, requesting the board to rectify the error these figures revealed.

But the State Board adopted a quiet and negative attitude—and nothing came of that.

The suffering people of Pullman addressed another appeal—not to their governor this time, but to a man who, in '93, had organized the American Railway Union in Chicago—Eugene V. Debs.

The American Railway Union was a large body of men, having 150,000 members, and its executives were then holding a meeting in Chicago. A sum of money was voted to the sufferers, and Debs sought out Mr. Pullman, got as far as Mr. Pullman's vice-president, T. H. Wickers, and offered to arbitrate.

Mr. Wickers said that there was nothing to arbitrate, which was a quiet, negative statement, and he added, according to testimony later sworn to by Debs, that he looked upon the strikers "as men on the sidewalk, as far as their relations with the Pullman company were concerned."

Debs went back with that to the Railway Union, and they decided to boycott Pullman. No more pullman cars would be handled. The cars would be cut off from all trains.

Opposition to that plan came promptly from the General Managers' Association, a group of organized railway executives controlling 40,000 miles of railroad. Naturally they were on Pullman's side. They didn't want their service impaired. They ordered the dismissal of any employee who refused to switch pullman cars. The strike then spread rapidly.

The General Managers' Association proceeded to deal with the situation. Mr. Pullman could continue in his quiet, negative way to do nothing, for his battle was being fought for him by a group more powerful and better organized than that of the Railway Union. The Association managed to have their own counsel appointed Special Assistant District Attorney. This special attorney proceeded to obtain from a co-



Federal troops arrived at the Pullman strike

operative judge a writ of injunction against the American Railway Union restraining them from interfering with the transportation of the mails, or with interstate commerce, or with the business of the railroads. Meanwhile, the Association hired 2,000 strikebreakers. About 3,400 men, who were afterward described by Police Superintendent Brennan of Chicago as "thugs, thieves and ex-convicts," were, at the request of the Association, sworn in as U. S. deputy marshals. Then the Special Assistant District Attorney (ex-counsel for the Association) appealed to the federal government to send in troops.

There had not been a single instance of organized violence or serious injury to any person or property. There were no rioting mobs to quell. The calling in of federal troops was not only without justification, but it was an insult to the governor of the state. To thus go over his head implied that he, as governor, could not control matters in his own state, or that he was remiss in doing so.

Altgeld's record gave no justification for this. He had kept order in Illinois. Wherever disorder had actually threat-

ened the public safety he had promptly dispatched state militia to the spot. He now protested to President Cleveland against the sending of federal troops to Chicago. Cleveland, however, upheld the action. A controversy ensued in which a governor battled for his rights against a President, and Chicagoans read the dispatches that passed between the two—Cleveland's curt and indirect, Altgeld's lengthy, specific and full of fire—in amazement which rapidly resolved into hostility directed against the governor.

For by this time, Altgeld had been tarred and feathered by the press. The pardon he had granted the anarchists was brought up as proof that Altgeld was himself an anarchist. His previous denunciation of the legality of that infamous case was now interpreted as disrespect for the law—and here he was defying the President himself! Now he was "Viper Altgeld," and cartoons depicted him as a snake curled to strike at law and order. "Everything that he did," says Edgar Lee Masters in *The Tale of Chicago*, "was misconstrued and falsified; anything that he said was twisted or ignored . . . he was believed by thousands to be in sympathy with violence, with anarchy, while Cleveland was held up as the protector of life and property and a defender of the republic and its laws."

The same misrepresentation applied to the motives of Eugene Debs. It was to no account that this man, who had thrown up a \$4,000-a-year job for a salary of \$75 a month—which soon shrank to no salary at all—to work for the betterment of railway workers, counseled, "a man who will destroy property and violate the law is an enemy and not a friend to the cause of labor." It was to no account that this man could later swear on oath, "Never in my life have I broken the law or advised others to do so." In the growing hysteria of public opinion Debs was seen as an instigator of riot and crime, and his name was spoken as though it were the word Devil. In the midst of the commotion, Jane Addams of Hull House remonstrated against Mr. Pullman's continued refusal

to arbitrate—and Hull House lost some of its financial backing.

Professor McElroy, in his biography of Cleveland, was prompted to recall Benjamin Franklin's remark upon hearing that George the Third was to send troops to Boston. "If sent, they will not find a rebellion, but they may create one."

It was so in Chicago. With armed forces, strikebreakers and thugs sent against them, the strikers broke out in wild, frenzied acts of violence. The manipulation of the General Managers' Association had turned them into outlaws, and they now behaved as such. But this was exactly the turn of affairs which suited the Association. Their concern was not to preserve order, but to break the strike. They knew that the maddened workers, driven to acts of violence, would incriminate themselves in the eyes of the public and thus justify whatever measures were used against them.

With the governor of the state cast aside, with matters gone beyond the control of Debs, the great railway strike rioted on with shooting on both sides and plenty of violence to scare and horrify the public.

I remember as a child hearing stories of that strike . . . My grandfather worked for the Burlington, and he was one of those who had started out with a quarter in his pocket, to make his way in the world. Farm-bred, hard-working, industrious man that he was, he could not see the workers' side in this, though I am sure he did not approve the methods used to break that strike. Still, to his way of thinking, trains should run, no matter what, and men who stopped the trains were wrong. And when it came to causing wrecks! His face set grimly, and he shook his head. Why, trains had been his life—his pride. Their safety was the thing he worked for, devising signal systems that would be foolproof. Wrecks had always meant mourning in our house and no talk at table, the honest work-pride hurt. Now here were men engaged in that great service to a nation who betrayed the trust that had been given them, actually tearing up the rails to cause a wreck, firing

upon trains, setting fire to freight cars, causing explosions in the yards. Trains pulled out bristling with soldiers, but few people dared to ride upon them.

One night a "loyal" engineer came in to see my grandfather. "Mr. R—, I can't take out No. 42 tonight. It's not safe. All the section hands have struck. The signals aren't working—"

"You know the run," my grandfather told him sternly. "You can slow up at the crossings."

"No, sir, I—"

"You're scared," my grandfather said and stood up, grim in condemnation. "All right, I'll take her out."

And he did.

The next night a brick was thrown through our dining-room window as he sat reading his paper by the lamp. Somehow, my grandfather got the idea that that brick was personally heaved by Debs! Nothing could convince him to the contrary. I know that many years later when I came on the scene and heard that story and with youth's audacity, declared, out of what Grandfather called my "book-larning," that Debs was not the kind of man to do a thing like that, Grandfather would have none of my brashness. He *knew*. He had lived through that strike.

In every conflict good men can be on both sides, acting in good faith and out of the honesty of their beliefs. I know that, because of my grandfather, who certainly was on the wrong side in that strike, and who just as certainly, never knew it. But that is the tragedy of conflict. It is never quite so simple an issue as it seems of good against evil. Even in what appears to be the clearest case of right against wrong, some habit of mind, some tenaciously cherished principle can blind a man and fuddle his judgment. And so few of us—so very few—realize that to think straight on any problem is a tough job. Fair and just conclusions are not easily arrived at.

The hue and cry against Altgeld grew louder as the legend spread over the land that federal troops had been necessary to quell the riots in Illinois. *The New York Nation* asserted, "This is Altgeld's theory of free institutions—freedom to throw trains off the track, to burn loaded cars in the midst of great cities, to kill conductors and engineers if they attempt to perform their duties, and to strangle the trade and commerce of the whole country."

Yet even with federal troops in Chicago against his wish, Altgeld had carried out his duty as governor, and when violence broke out he dispatched state militia to the scene.

July 4, the federal troops arrived. July 7, Eugene Debs was arrested, and by then the strike was practically broken, though it continued to flare up sporadically throughout the summer. The executives of the American Federation of Labor, in a special session in Chicago, advised the strikers to return to work July 12.

With Debs sentenced to six months in jail for contempt of court, and Altgeld existing under the dark cloud of public suspicion and enmity, and Hull House getting along on curtailed funds, the Pullman strike came to an end, and in his own quiet, negative way, Mr. Pullman continued to rule over his "model town."

But very soon after the strike, the Illinois Supreme Court ruled that the Pullman company was exceeding the rights of charter, and that it must cease playing landlord to its workers. At the time of Pullman's death in 1897, the model town had ceased to be a feudalistic community and had become part of Chicago proper, with the city absorbing all civic functions, and the houses going into the hands of private owners.

Progress is strange and indirect. Yet—there is always progress.

Altgeld, in a speech made in '93 at the laying of the cornerstone of a new building for the Chicago Academy of Science,

said, "The generations to come will care nothing for our warehouses, our buildings or our railroads, but they will ask, what has Chicago done for humanity, where has it made man wiser or nobler or stronger; what new thought or principles or trust has it given to the world?"

In 1902, Altgeld made his last speech. He had not been re-elected. A number of the reforms that he had instituted had been swept away by his successor, a number had been allowed to lapse. He had suffered defeat, and humiliations had been piled upon him. Now he was ill, and he was harassed by a wearisome and exhausting law suit, but these were his words:

"I am not discouraged. Things will right themselves. The pendulum swings one way and then another. But the steady pull of gravitation is toward the center of the earth. Any structure must be plumb if it is to endure, or the building will fall. So it is with nations. Wrong may seem to triumph, right may seem to be defeated, but the gravitation of eternal justice is toward the Throne of God. Any political institution which is to endure must be plumb with the line of justice."

Within a few hours, he was dead.

Clarence Darrow, speaking at his funeral, said, "Though we lay you in the grave and hide you from the sight of men, your brave words still speak for the poor, the oppressed, the captive and the weak; and your devoted life inspires countless souls to do and dare in the holy cause for which you lived and died."

Altgeld lies in a grave at Graceland Cemetery. Few come to honor it. Yet it is from the lives of such rare men as Altgeld that our democratic faith is made strong. Ideas cannot be negated by the passing or rescinding of a law. The good work he accomplished could not be undone. It stayed in the minds of many, giving them a goal toward which they drove, carrying to further accomplishment the good work he had begun.

Professor Faulkner in *The History of American Life* states,

"With the exception of John P. Altgeld of Illinois, there was hardly a state executive who stood out during the nineties as the representative of a better political day."

And Vachel Lindsay wrote:

"Sleep softly . . . eagle forgotten . . . under the stone,
Time has its way with you there, and the clay has its own.
Sleep on O brave hearted, O wise man, that kindled the flame—
To live in mankind is far more than to live in a name,
To live in mankind, far, far more . . . than to live in a name."

The century was drawing to a close, and many were the activities driving full speed ahead, some of them along familiar patterns and some emerging out of the unknown. In 1898, there was a bit of a skirmish known as a war. Indeed it was a war, by old-style definition, lasting from April until August, and it was to have enduring and important consequences in the transfer of the Philippine Islands to the United States. But in the life of Chicago it was incidental. Although it did drag Chicago's name before the country to her discredit, for scandals arose concerning some tainted beef allegedly sold to the army, and in 1899 an army beef court of inquiry met.

It is reported that Mr. Armour was deeply hurt by the suspicion that he would sell tainted beef to soldiers. Ernest Poole, in *Giants Gone*, says, "He took it like a stab in the breast. Again and again he swore to his friends, 'Never in my whole business career have I ever sold my soul like that!'" He had not been accused of selling his soul, as I understand it, but maybe there had been a little confusion some place, and whatever it was they ate, a number of soldiers had died outright.

However that may have been, Chicago was too busy fending off snatch-thieves and trying to get back bits of herself that had been sneaked away to pay much attention. In '96, the "Gray Wolves" preyed upon the city. A group of aldermen and their political associates were bent on selling as much of

Chicago as they could lay hands on to whoever paid the most. Charles T. Yerkes had obtained control of the West Side and North Side street railways. He gave the people abominable service and won a handsome financial reward for doing so, and proceeded to manipulate the finances in some artful ways that won him the enmity of honest men. When the Municipal Voters' League was formed to improve the personnel of the city council with a brave and energetic man, George E. Cole, at the head of it, Yerkes decided prospects over in London looked better. Before he left, he made a handsome gift to the University of Chicago of a telescope. He wanted the job of building London's subway, and the man who could give him that job, it was said, had a hobby for astronomy. That being so, Mr. Yerkes needed no telescope of his own to see the bright star of his personal destiny.

The "Gray Wolves" did quite a bit of trading in Chicago property before they were hunted down. They bargained away streets to surface railway companies, and the land under the streets for pneumatic postal tubes. They made some extraordinary deals in gas that didn't look right to an inquiring eye. Large tracts of school lands found their way into the hands of powerful interests. The Municipal Voters' League had a lot with which to occupy itself—and it did, more credit to those good citizens. They had been somewhat startled when, in '95, 11,000 pupils had been turned away from public schools because of lack of room.'

The career of Mr. Yerkes was only one phenomenon of Chicago life which interested a young man then serving as a newspaper reporter. His job took him all over the city, and he saw many things, saw them with that mingling of detachment and of deep impression that produced the need to be articulate about the things he saw. Sordid things they were, the public said, when the books came out. *Sister Carrie* wasn't a nice book at all. People were sure Chicago shop girls weren't like that, and if they were—well, who would care to read

about them? Nor was *The Titan*, which took Yerkes for a model, pleasant reading.

But Theodore Dreiser was not trying to write pretty stories to amuse people. The reform spirit was in his grim honesty and in his labored efforts. His was a powerful voice in that new realism which was taking shape in those of the Middle West whose writing was coming into notice.

A press club had been organized as far back as 1872 by men like Melville E. Stone and Elwyn Baron. It had grown to be a bohemian rendezvous by the time of the Fair. Here came, upon occasion, Eugene Field, then conducting his column, "Sharps and Flats" in *The Chicago Daily News*. Edgar Lee Masters says, "With his verses and witticisms and judgments upon life, manners and literature, he was as important to the building of Chicago as Burnham or Sullivan." Here, too, would come George Ade, also a *Daily News* writer of that period, and Finley Peter Dunne, creator of Mr. Dooley's many philosophic and searching, if uproarious, comments on life in general and Chicago's Archer Avenue life in particular. Opie Read was among those who foregathered, and many another whose name was being mentioned far beyond the city limits. And among those whose names were traveling were others not of the newspaper field. At the University of Chicago, a teacher of English was writing novels in the new realistic form, and soon the books of Robert Herrick would be thoughtfully considered. Also associated with the university was a poet ranked among the foremost of his time, William Vaughn Moody.

In 1896, a book was published in London which had been written by Stanley Waterloo, a newspaper reporter in Chicago at the time of the fire, and this evoked a far-visioned comment from a prominent English author, Sir Walter Besant: "There has sprung up in the city of Chicago a new literary center . . . a company of novelists, poets and essayists . . . who are united by an earnest resolution to cultivate letters. It may be objected that this is nothing but a provincial coterie

. . . and that . . . it will presently disappear. I do not think that will be the fate of the Chicago movement."

And in another field, an important step forward was taken. In 1897, the first exhibition of paintings devoted to artists of Chicago and its vicinity was held. By this time, the Art Institute had become a mecca for many a youngster in the country round about. Its school was very much alive. People said the Museum had the look of being used.

Work of a high order was being done out at the University of Chicago which was to bring lasting benefits in an important field. John Dewey had become head of the department of philosophy and education in 1894. Says Elmer Harrison Wilde in *The Foundation of Modern Education*, "He found himself in a position favorable to the inauguration of a new movement in education at a time when it was greatly needed. In 1896, he established his 'Laboratory School,' now often spoken of as 'The Dewey School,' where he was able to put to the test of practical experimentation his theories of socializing education . . . The practices and experiments of this pioneer venture in education had more to do with giving impetus to this new movement than any other previous endeavor . . . Dewey's Laboratory School was the precursor of many socializing schools . . . among them the Francis W. Parker School of Chicago."

In the last days of the century, while many were still marveling over the appearance of the first automobile or shaking their heads over the queer "glider" experiments being conducted down on the dunes by Dr. Octave Chanute, and the completion of the elevated encircling much of the business district had given to that area the nickname of "The Loop," Chicago opened the first Juvenile Court in America.

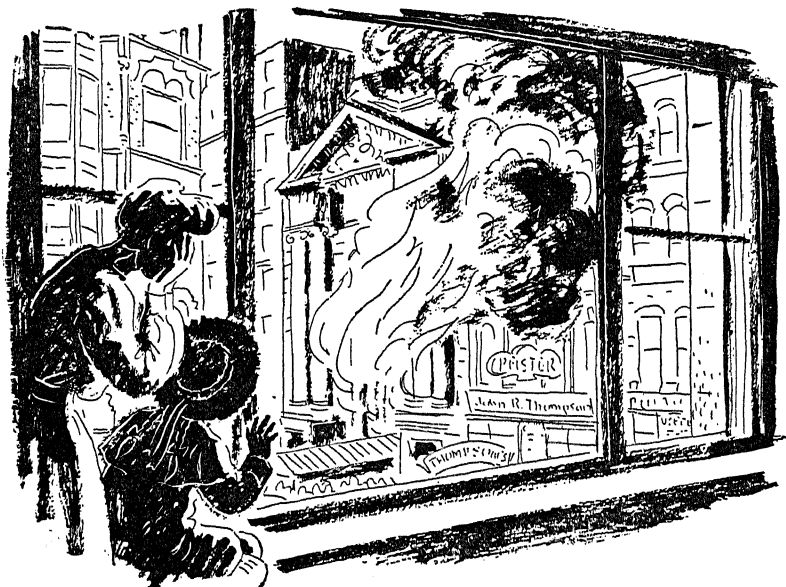
Chicago, from the outset, had been concerned with what concerns all cities—commerce. That, you might say, had been the propelling urge which underlay her growth. Yet, heading for one goal, material success, how much else had come into being, evolved, it might almost seem, by accident!

Many were the shoots of growth which had sprung up that had their own high aims, unrelated to that initial urge.

Chicago drove on into the twentieth century with all the power of a big locomotive. But if you had asked the travelers where they were bound, you would have had many answers.

Chapter Fifteen

TWO WORLDS



Looking out toward Randolph

IN A SMALL TOWN a hundred miles west of Chicago on that December morning in 1903, the children were roused early, and at once a holiday excitement filled the house. This was to be a day big with event! Breakfasting by gaslight, the children could talk of nothing but the trip to Chicago, the visit to Marshall Field's big store, the luncheon with Father and then—the matinee! A shopping trip to Chicago was in itself an event, just rare enough to be thrilling, but with a visit to the theater added to it, the event was as excit-

ing as Christmas. And this was to be the toddler's first experience. Baby sister had never been to a theater before.

On the train, the little boy and girl kept up their chattering, sitting close, hands clasped, and looking out at the fascinating spectacle of a landscape in motion. Under the gray wintry sky the stark trees swept by and the pale stacks of corn, standing in even rows, conical, like a vast orderly gathering of small Indian tepees covering the level plain. How fast things whizzed close up! How slow they moved on the dim line where sky and level earth met—as though the train were running along the outer rim of a great wheel and over there, far off, was the hub.

The little boy grew aware that his mother sat silent, removed from them in mood, taking no share in the enjoyment. He saw that her face was grave, that there was a pucker between her brows. "What's the matter, Mother?"

The woman turned puzzled, troubled eyes upon him. "I don't know. I—I just wish we weren't going to the theater."

The sudden aghast dismay on the two little faces made the woman's heart sink guiltily.

"We *are* going, aren't we?" the little boy demanded, and then recalling some previous hesitancy, "Sis is old enough, Mother. She won't cry. She *wants* to go to the theater."

His mother tried to smile a reassurance. "Oh, I know she does. No, it's not that . . ."

She could not say what it was . . . A heavy feeling . . . a terrible despondency . . . and out of it in sharp recurring flashes, the quickening sense of alarm—*don't go*.

She could not explain it. She tried to later when they were all together at luncheon and there was her husband beaming happily at the youngsters and holding in his hand the four theater tickets. "Not very good ones," he admitted to his wife. "Best I could get, though. In the balcony. The Iroquois has a hit this time. And with school closed for holidays—well, all the children in Chicago want to go!"

The woman heard herself speaking. "We're not going." She did not know why those words had come out, and now she was confronted with three staring faces, accusing in their amazement and dismay, but having said it, she knew somehow that it was right. "We can't," she urged, "we mustn't—not this time. We . . ." No, she could not explain.

Not going?—when the tickets had been bought?—when the trip had been made?—when the play was billed as "A delight for the children," an extravaganza, called *Mr. Bluebeard*?

The woman hung her head, miserable at the commotion she had caused and which could only seem unreasonable, unkind, but somehow . . . No, she stuck to it, trying her best to make amends, to hold out promise of next time . . .

Dejectedly, they wandered back to Field's, a visit to the toy department offered to the children as a poor substitute. Time dragged along . . .

The clerks behind the counters were whispering together, inattentive. There was a stir in the aisles—people hurrying to the State Street windows—looking out toward Randolph—something was happening.

Fire had come again to Chicago, come in a swift horrible visitation. The Iroquois Theater. . . .

Engines in the streets. Things being taken out hastily, stacked in a heap under the marquee, hastily covered with sheets . . .

They went back on the train, the four of them. The little boy slept, stretched out on the seat. The woman held the slumbering little girl tight in her arms. By then, something of the full horror was known, could be experienced in imagination. Flames licking out from the draperies at the proscenium. Eddie Foy, a brave clown, standing in the center of the stage—"Please be quiet—no danger!" And then, even as he urged the orchestra to play, some door opened backstage, a sudden draft sweeping flames and fumes and smoke out into the auditorium—and panic. Exit doors which were hidden by

draperies unmarked by a light. Exit doors which opened inward and would not give to the mass of bodies hurled against them. Exit doors which were locked. Lights gone out and darkness in the balconies, the stairs. People burned in their seats, suffocated, trampled. So many children, so many women. Five hundred and seventy-five dead.

"No one in the balcony got out alive," the man murmured, and then turned his face to gaze again at his wife in wonderment and thankfulness. "How did you *know*?"

The woman held her little girl tighter still, and her eyes were wet for those other mothers . . .

My mother never could explain. It was just a strong feeling, that was all she could say.

The Iroquois fire disaster shocked the world. Everywhere theaters were closed for inspection, even in Europe. The asbestos curtains, the fireproofed scenery, the well-marked, easily accessible, easily opened exits theaters now have date from that horror.

There is always progress, but some of it is at a frightful cost.

Altgeld's legacy made Illinois, in the first twenty years of the new century, one of the most progressive in social legislation. Laws that he had pioneered for and achieved had for the most part endured and, where repealed, had been re-enacted.

"Following Altgeld's courageous precedent, subsequent governors, with the support of organized labor, attacked the evils of unbridled industrialism and sought to impart morality and fair play in dealings between employer and labor," the *Illinois Writers' Project* reports.

A number of beneficial labor laws were passed. The State Board of Arbitration, founded during Altgeld's term of office, lasted on until 1917, when its duties were vested in the Industrial Commission. In 1903, the employment of children under

sixteen for night work was prohibited. In 1911, the Occupational Disease Act was passed, and in the same year the Workmen's Compensation Act was first put on the books to be revised in 1913, again in 1917. By 1913, Woman Suffrage had been approved.

Labor troubles—as troubles between employer and employee are always called, whichever side may be at fault—continued, to be sure. A revolution in civilization of the giant magnitude of the new industrialism—and it may, in the long run of history, still be called “new”—poses problems of adjustment not readily solved. In the unfinished story of that adjustment, Chicago's role is still a prominent one.

Almost every political organization which had its genesis from labor unrest first sprouted in Chicago. There, in 1901, Debs organized the Socialist Party. In 1905, Chicago became the center of the I.W.W. There in 1919—in the same year that Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis dealt the death blow to the I.W.W. by finding more than a hundred of its leaders guilty of criminal syndicalism—the Communist Party was organized. And there the nonpolitical labor organizations continued to grow in strength.

Strikes went on, some lost, some won; some minor, and some major. In 1904, a strike in the stockyards involving 50,000 men ran from July 12 to September 3. In the same year, Theodore Roosevelt was elected, carrying every ward in the city. During his administration, he sent investigators through the stockyards, and when they returned with a favorable report, sent them again, still dissatisfied. This time their report was far from favorable. In 1906, Upton Sinclair published *The Jungle*, a novel exposing unsanitary conditions in the stockyards. It was so widely read that it is believed to have effected more corrections than the President's inquiry led to. In 1910, a strike of 40,000 in the clothing industry, led by Sidney Hillman, though lost, contributed largely to the growth of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of

America. The strikes went on, but so did the progress in industrial relations.

The good work done in attacking the particularly vicious city corruption was by no means at a successful end. That struggle continued under successive mayors, some notable in their co-operation with the best elements in the city's life, and some denounced by those elements. Good men and good women labored together for good causes. Some, like Mrs. Alzina Stevens, a Hull House worker who had been a mill-hand at thirteen, came up from the depressed classes. Some, like the benevolent and active Mrs. Joseph T. Bowen, came from the wealthy class, and to mention only these two names is to deal unjustly with the many fine people who threw their energies into one cause or another, battling for the rights of their fellow-citizens to a just and decent life. And—it is worth reiteration—in Chicago the sense of decency and justice was not restricted to any one class. The goodness in humanity shone out from top to bottom—just as the evil held sway at all levels.

It is consistent with Chicago's representative qualities that an organization which was in many ways as typically American as any ever formed grew out of that city—the Rotary. The many business clubs which have since dotted the land had their inception in Chicago in 1905.

Unquestionably, the beauty of the Fair lingering on in memory caused many a Chicagoan to eye his city critically. It was *not* beautiful. Still, couldn't something be done?

This matter was seriously considered—not by those alone whose business was beauty in one form or another, but by Chicago businessmen. It was to them that Burnham spoke of the wasted beauty of the lake front, addressing a banquet held by the Merchants' Club. "A very high purpose will be served if the lake shore be restored to the people and made beautiful for them . . . what sort of prosperity is this which

we should foster and maintain? Not for the rich people solely or principally, for they can take care of themselves and wander where they will in pursuit of happiness; but the prosperity of those who must have employment in order to live." For such as these, said Burnham, Chicago should be made beautiful.

The Merchants' Club received the idea favorably and fell to discussing it, and so did the Commercial Club, another organization of businessmen of wealth. In 1907, the two clubs merged under the heading of the latter and a proposal was made that Mr. Burnham draw up a plan.

That plan became a book. It was passed from hand to hand, discussed at length. Rich men put up money for the project, but it was soon seen to require more than private financing. Would not the city itself undertake this work?

The mayor then was Fred A. Busse, born in Chicago, a rough-talking man and one who did not inspire hope in the hearts of those who spoke for civic beauty. But Busse considered the matter very practically. Making the city attractive in appearance would be a good financial asset. Visitors would be impressed. That conclusion being reached, he added a humanitarian point. The planners, he said, "have particularly had in mind relief for the neglect which the great West Side has suffered."

The Chicago Plan Commission, with Charles H. Wacker at its head, accepted Burnham's proposals and began the work of beautifying the city. Burnham's vision included much that has since come to pass, the connecting of Jackson and Lincoln Parks by broad highways, the widening of Michigan Avenue, the planting of trees in that then bleak stretch, Grant Park, the elimination of old iron bridges and the erection of two-deck bascules.

And while this beauty of physical image was being wrought, another beauty which dealt with man's spirit came into being. In 1912, Harriet Monroe founded *Poetry, a Magazine of Verse*. This Chicago enterprise was, and still is,

unique in the history of American culture.

Harriet Monroe was a fine poet, not new to Chicago. She was the one, you remember, who had given the dedicatory ode at the Columbian Exposition, and she would be long remembered for her many services to this most fragile art. Miss Monroe published several books of poetry and, in 1917, with Alice Corbin Henderson as co-editor, issued *The New Poetry, an Anthology of Twentieth Century Verse* which was revised and enlarged in 1923 and again in 1932, doing much to bring the young and unknown poets of America to recognition.

Harriet Monroe's work with the magazine *Poetry* was a task which required all her persistent courage and discerning skill, and it is one that has greatly enriched this branch of American literature. Annual prizes were established, not limited to poetry published in the magazine. Recipients of these prizes include names now well known and loved, Carl Sandburg, Vachel Lindsay, Edgar Lee Masters, Mark Turbeyfill, Lew Sarett—Illinois men all, and many closely associated with Chicago life. Masters, a Chicago lawyer, was publishing his Illinois epitaphs, *Spoon River Anthology*, prior to 1915, and his contributions in poetry and prose, including his biography of Vachel Lindsay, have been many and important. Carl Sandburg's volume, *Chicago Poems*, published in 1915, expressed the spirit of a great modern industrial metropolis, and its dedicatory "Chicago" has become famous. In 1916, Sandburg began his great work on the biography of Lincoln which has been carried on without diminishing his output of poetry.

That *Poetry, a Magazine of Verse* has continued down into the present is indeed a major accomplishment. It has broken the tough prairie for a rich harvesting.

Chicago proved a stimulating subject to many writers. Sherwood Anderson found the city good material, and in *Marching Men* and *A Story Teller's Story*, his impressions of Chicago are recorded. Frank Norris was another of many

who chose Chicago as a subject. In 1914, Margaret Anderson established in Chicago *The Little Review* which pioneered for the most advanced forms of creative writing, and after three years, the magazine moved on to New York and thence to Paris.

In 1920, H. L. Mencken was writing of the "literary capital" in an English periodical: "It is indeed amazing how steadily a Chicago influence shows itself when the literary ancestry and training of present-day American writers are investigated. The brand of the sugar-cured ham seems to be upon them all. With two exceptions, there is not a single novelist of the younger generation—that is, a serious novelist deserving a civilized reader's notice—who has not sprung from the Chicago palatinate; Dreiser, Anderson, Miss Cather, Mrs. Watts, Tarkington, Wilson, Herrick, Patterson, even Churchill. It was Chicago that produced Henry B. Fuller, the packer of the modern American novel. It was Chicago that developed Frank Norris, its first practitioner of genius. And it was Chicago that produced Dreiser, undoubtedly the greatest artist of them all . . . The new poetry movement is thoroughly Chicagoan; the majority of its chief poets are from the Middle West; *Poetry*, the organ of the movement, is published in Chicago. So with the Little Theater movement. Long before it was heard of in New York, it was firmly on its legs in Chicago. And to support these various reforms and revolts, some of them already of great influence, others abortive and quickly forgotten, there is in Chicago a body of critical opinion that is unsurpassed for discretion and intelligence in America."

The Little Theater movement spread as a result of the acclaim which came to Maurice Browne for his work in Chicago, begun in 1912. In a tiny theater housed in the Fine Arts Building, he presented plays by Euripides, Strindberg, Synge, and by contemporary Chicago writers. But Browne did not claim to be the first in the Little Theater field. In an article written in 1913 he stated, "It is nearly half a

generation since Laura Dainty Pelham established the Hull House Players and laid the first foundation stone in America of what is known as the Little Theater . . . Our future dramatic historian . . . will certainly record the fact that Chicago was the first city in America where the movement came into active being, not only with the work of Mrs. Pelham, but also, a few years later, with the plucky and thorough pioneering of Donald Robertson and the earliest experiments of the Chicago Theater Society."

In 1916, another high-aiming theater venture arose, among whose members were Kenneth Sawyer Goodman and Alice Gerstenberg. The accurate purpose of the noncommercial Little Theater was clearly seen by these originators who sought to produce dramatic work of value which, either because of its originality or its supposed lack of commercial appeal, or its unknown and unheralded author, was rejected by the commercial theater. They did not allow the Little Theater to become merely an adjunct or a poor imitation of the commercial offerings as has happened with increasing frequency, and, of course, to the deterioration of the whole Little Theater conception. When the Little Theater becomes merely a tryout house for a Broadway opening, its value as a producing medium for theater art has gone.

Another art, long zealously fostered by Chicagoans, found new and comfortable headquarters in 1904. In that year, Orchestra Hall was dedicated. To many, sadness hung over the event, for Theodore Thomas, who had so long labored to give Chicago the best of symphony music, passed away just prior to the establishment of his orchestra in appropriate quarters. But a member of the orchestra, Frederick Stock, took up the baton Thomas had lain down, and soon proved his fine qualifications for that post which he was to fill so ably till the time of his death.

Chicago had always loved opera. The coming of an opera company from the East was a gala event, and to Chicago had come the best for a brief session each year. But in 1910, an-

other cultural gain was made—The Chicago Grand Opera Company was incorporated, and the Auditorium leased for its presentations. Singers were exchanged with the Metropolitan Opera House in New York, and a high level of presentation was maintained.

Art flourished in the city, both native and imported, but science held its own. To A. A. Michelson of the University of Chicago came the award of the Nobel prize in physics in 1907. Professor Michelson was the first American to win the Nobel prize in science.

The reform spirit stayed vigorous, working through its established channels and branching out in new ones. 1903 brought the establishment of the Jewish People's Institute for the social advancement of Jewish people. 1910, the Chicago Council of Boy Scouts was formed. In the same year, the Woman's City Club was instituted as an aid to intelligent citizenship. In 1911, the Chicago Vice Commission was at work, and 1915 saw the creation of the Chicago Urban League, working to improve the condition of Chicago Negroes.

But all of this progress went on in a city where the skies were still darkened with smoke, where hurry and clangor still marked the busy, crowded streets, where there was a sense of the big city being some kind of an enormous and fantastic railway yard into which the great trains were everlastingly rushing from all sides, puffing and tooting and causing a bell-ringing clamor at the crossings and sending up more soot to darken the houses and dirty the windows. This was a city where the southwest wind on a warm night still held its stockyard taint; where crime had its tenacious grip, and corruption fought back boldly in its long battle with reform.

The city's growth showed no sign of pause. In the first decade of the century, the population mark went up to 2,185,283. And Julian Street, quoted in *As Others See Chicago*, had this to say: .

"Chicago is stupefying. It knows no rules, and I know

none by which to judge it. It stands apart from all the cities of the world, isolated by its own individuality, an Olympian freak, a fable, an allegory, an incomprehensible phenomenon, a prodigious paradox in which youth and maturity, brute strength and soaring spirit, are harmoniously confused. Call Chicago mighty, monstrous, multifarious, vital, lusty, stupendous, indomitable, intense, unnatural, aspiring, puissant, preposterous, transcendent—call it what you like—throw the dictionary at it! It is all that you can do, except to shoot it with statistics. And even the statistics of Chicago are not deadly as most statistics are.”

In 1914, a great many Chicagoans read their papers with an anxious interest. The news of war in Europe came home close to many of German birth. To others, it was a matter of interesting speculation, but Chicago had its own affairs to tend to, and Europe was a long way off. Most people were more shocked by another disaster of Chicagoan proportion that occurred in 1915 than by the dead that lay on foreign fields . . .

It was a warm, muggy, gray morning on Saturday, July 24, when the employees of the Hawthorne plant of the Western Electric Company poured across the gangplank onto the decks of the excursion boat *Eastland*, tied up at the southwest end of the Clark Street Bridge in the Chicago River. They were bound for an all-day holiday, and they came in a crowd, excited, laughing, shouting at one another, rapidly taking possession of the boat, filling the decks. And then—

The heavily loaded boat was seen to list to the port side, away from the moorings. The list was a slow roll, ominous in the extent of the tilt, sending everything not screwed into place sliding across the deck. Inside the cabin, heavy furnishings fell over with a smash. Passengers reeled and staggered, clutching for support at whatever was nearest to hand. The boat came up out of that deep roll, but went on rolling over—to the other side, again tilting dangerously. By now fright was

general, and the terrified crowd was crying out. This time the boat again righted herself, came up straight on an even keel, but again rolled on, slowly tilting over—over—

The captain was yelling, "Jump!"

Some did. Many were trapped between decks or in the cabins. The *Eastland* lay on her side in the Chicago River, and the water was suddenly alive with struggling bodies. Somehow, right there in the center of the city, with men lining the bridges and the river banks, casting out ropes, with tugs coming hastily to rescue work, few lives were saved. Eight hundred and twelve persons died in that disaster.

But 1915 had a brighter side. At least so it was thought by those who did not shudder at the innovation which passed under the name of "music." Jazz had come to Chicago, and with it the dancing craze. Paul Whiteman credits—at least "credits" would be the expression he would choose, not "blames"—Chicago for giving jazz its initial send-off. Wherever it had originated—and no one, despite a keen interest in the phenomenon, can speak with authority on the exact spot or date of its inception, though the locality in general is accepted as the South—wherever it had originated, it was, said Mr. Whiteman, Chicago who launched the promotion of jazz, bringing this urchin of lowly and unknown birth into the glitter and elegance of Chicago's best hotels. And from there . . . well, the whole country took it up. And it was not long before many of the very people who had been most censorious of the whole thing were to be seen in the throes of the bunny hug or the fox trot, dancing the one step to *Too Much Mustard* or attempting the maxixe, jumping up from tea or dinner in a public place where customarily behavior had been quiet and decorous and a few muted strings and a piano had served as an unobtrusive background for a quiet conversation.

And the slit came into the ankle-length hobble skirt. Irene

Castle set the vogue for short hair. *Thé Dansants* spread throughout the land.

As the war in Europe went on and the gravity and magnitude of the conflict began to be more fully realized by Americans, and as the trend to war developed in this country, tension rose and indecision was evidenced by two opposing groups of thought. To some, entrance into the war was considered a noble duty. To others, the cause of pacifism was equally noble. In both camps, the reform spirit was evident, and the intentions were of the highest.

Geographically, people pointed out, the United States was singularly blessed with a vast ocean to the right and to the left and no menacing power massed upon her borders. This freedom from fear of attack, unknown by any European power, had bred an easygoing, peace-loving spirit, in which the ever-alert and protective militant tension of the European countries was lacking. The standing army in America was a mere observance of custom and a weak one at that. While in European countries the presence of an army was ever apparent if only through the number of men in uniform seen upon the streets, even in the largest cities in the States, a soldier or sailor among the crowd was something of a rarity. Few families, indeed, set aside one son for the military profession, and the thought that war was wrong had grown in many hearts that, while honoring patriots of the past, had come to believe that war was part of an outmoded era, and peace an attainment of the civilized world.

But against this thought rose the moral principle of coming to the aid of the right side in a struggle where right and wrong were clearly defined in the public mind by such outrages as the rape of Belgium. And, with the war going on and on, it was all too apparent that the right side needed help to win. Added to this righteous belief was the indignation roused by submarine sinkings which came to involve the loss of life of American citizens. Though the people had rallied to the

slogan used in Wilson's campaign for re-election—"He has kept us out of war—" once war was declared, the duty to uphold the decision of Congress and the moral issue the war involved swayed many who had been ardent pacifists. Americans, who had never conceived that war on a big scale would disrupt their lives, entered into the first World War with something of the fervor of a crusade. There was a kind of joy evinced in the parades, the bands, the singing, the energetic Liberty Loan drives, the entrance of women into Red Cross work and factory work, a joy which, in its newly adopted war spirit, felt little tolerance for those dwindling numbers of the pacifist belief who still clung to their convictions. In that sudden transition from peace to war on a big scale, there was bound to be some friction and disorder in a country normally so far removed from thought of war. Conscientious objectors were not always kindly treated. The term "slacker" was hurled with venom. The investigations of federal agents were backed with a public zeal which sometimes had the mob psychology of a witch hunt or a lynching.

Chicago, with its half million of German ancestry, and a mayor, William Hale Thompson, who was obviously not in line, went through these throes with its usual intensity, and the feeling stayed high, even though the German-born, early in the war, showed clearly that their loyalties were with the country of their adoption, and Chicago, along with the rest of Illinois, contributed more than her quota of soldiers. Perhaps the mayor had misjudged the German-born and the extent of the pacifist feeling. Certainly he did not represent the will of the majority when he attempted to snub Marshal Joffre, whose tour included a visit to Chicago, or when he gave permission to a large peace rally other cities had refused, and when conflict arose between the mayor and the governor the people sided with the governor in sentiment. William Hale Thompson's popularity faded for the time being. Chicago was ashamed of him.

And war again brought new gains to the city's wealth and

growth. Chicago was by this time the greatest slaughtering and packing center in the world, with steel furnaces which had the largest capacity in the States, and she was handling the great grain produce of the country. To all her enterprises, war brought increase, all but Art—that suffered neglect. Little Theaters shut down, and little magazines limped along on curtailed budgets. Painters and sculptors tightened their belts, and musicians who played German music suffered for it.

Three hundred and fifty thousand Illinois men were drawn off by war, and workers were needed. That demand was only slightly answered by the entrance of women into industries which had hitherto been closed to them. More were needed.

They came in a great migration up from the South. Sixty-five thousand Negroes streamed hopefully into the city.

Chicago did not prepare for their coming, nor were provisions made for them upon arrival. It did not occur to the authorities to do so. Many were the people who had been dumped into the city and left to make out for themselves. But in the case of the Negroes, the situation was a different one. Their attempts to make out for themselves in the matter of housing led to immediate conflict. Chicago unthinkingly expected the Negroes to stay in the "Black Belt," and the "Black Belt" was already overcrowded. Double up as they might in the squalid, congested slum area which had been conceded to them, with its ramshackle buildings, defective plumbing, and health hazards of every kind, they could not stay put. They had to overflow into the adjoining "white" neighborhoods where they were not wanted. And that they were not wanted was made plain by acts of violence and terrorism. Hoodlum gangs chased Negroes through the streets. Bombs were planted in areas where the Negro tide had spread. In the two years from 1917 to 1919, twenty-four such bombing outrages occurred.

Chicago drew a color line and thereby created a problem,

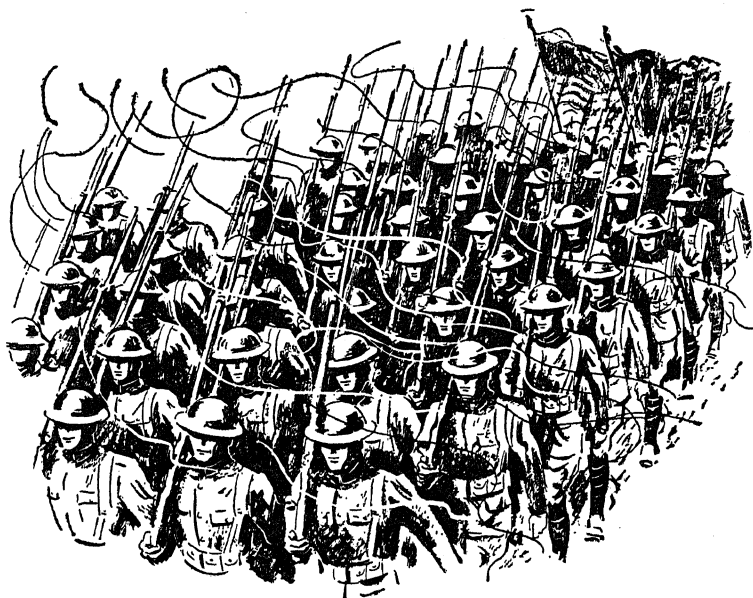
but Chicago did nothing to solve that problem. Twenty years before, at the start of the century, it was reliably estimated that not more than fifty Negro families were home-owners in Chicago. In 1919, there were many thousands in possession of houses which were, for the most part, poor affairs, though here and there, despite odds raised against them greater than were faced by any other group that came, respectable and well-appointed homes were owned.

One man's name stands out—Julius Rosenwald. This wealthy Jewish philanthropist, who had once been a poor boy, had the intelligence and human kindliness to know that the Negroes needed friends to help them—friends among the white race. Even before the migration had set in, he had been drawn to consideration of the Negro problem, had visited Tuskegee, talked with Booker T. Washington, and had endowed Negro schools, Negro Y.M.C.A.'s. But with the throng of Negroes in Chicago the problem had passed beyond the help of any single man or any single organization. The problem, with all its gathering menace, was one that cried aloud for public recognition, for city aid.

But nothing was done.

The day came when that gigantic rumor of an armistice leaped across the country and sent it into a madness of celebration. The long unnatural tension broke—it was over!—no more war! That afternoon, that night, brought such a surging joy that everywhere a bedlam reigned. All the New Year's Eve celebrations of a century poured into a few hours could not have produced a greater tumult. The city streets were thronged, and it was as though there were no strangers anywhere. They could all laugh and shout and talk together in the common and uniting joy. Over! No more of it . . .

The boys came back—most of them. And to most it seemed a poor reward that so soon after they should be faced with the amazing spectacle of a “dry” nation. Why, they asked, when there was no need now to conserve grain? No one had



The boys came back—most of them

ever really thought that temperance pressure could do this! To many, it seemed an assault upon their individual liberty. Grumbling was widespread.

And then it was discovered there were ways . . .

A new word came into American usage—Bootlegging.

Some of the boys coming back found other men in their jobs—black men. Oh, it wasn't hard to get a job then, but still . . . Some of them found the family had been forced to move into a new neighborhood, and the old house had new faces in it—black ones. Some of them, going to the beach on a hot summer day, saw over to one side a new crowd—black.

Sunday, July 27, 1919, was a hot day. The South Side beach was crowded. Men and women and children played with the lovely cool water, all blue and sun-sparkled, but to one side of an imaginary line all were white people, to the other side, black. Hostility and fear, inequality and ignorance, made that

line. But one boy forgot that it was there, a seventeen-year-old boy, having fun in the water. He was a Negro, and he swam into the white area.

Under the blue sky of summer there was a sudden onslaught with stones. Too late, the boy understood and took fright—and drowned.

The Negroes appealed to a white policeman. But the man he arrested was not white but black. The Negroes drew together. More of them came to the beach, stood close, the tragedy, the injustice, growing big in their minds. The policeman sent for other policemen. As they appeared, a Negro fired at them. The shot was returned, and the Negro fell.

Night came over the city, and in the hot darkness Negroes and whites drew apart. Murderous gangs of white hoodlums formed and hunted through the dark streets and alleys. These Negroes, up from the South, knew what the white men could sink to—and here it was. They formed their own groups and struck back in terror and desperation. The race riot was on.

For four days and nights the horror reigned, and the police did not manage to put a stop to it. Negro houses were set aflame. Negroes were pursued wherever they showed their faces. Through the central business streets the hunts raged. No street was safe to walk upon for black or white, and to make matters worse, there was a streetcar strike which robbed the citizens of even that safety of transportation.

A friend of mine, an actress, was then playing in Chicago. She told me that on Monday every dark face had vanished. In the hotel where she was stopping not one Negro employee had dared to come to work. The elevators were run by desk clerks. Chambermaids took the place of waiters. On Monday night before the performance, a Negro fled into the theater alley, running for his life. It was a blind alley. His pursuers would have trapped him there. At the risk of his life, an actor took him in backstage and hid him. And for two nights the show went on with everyone in the cast knowing why

it was the actor brought in food, but not asking where the fugitive was hidden, in dread of a mob that might break in to search. And the actor was a comedian who worked "black face!" But not then—it would have been too risky.

Horried Chicago asked for militia. Strangely, the mayor who had always shown himself in the light of "a friend to the colored man," was slow to act. The governor at last ordered the militia in, and on Wednesday evening they arrived, putting an end to the worst disorders. Thirty-eight had been killed, and five hundred and thirty-seven injured. Two million dollars' worth of property had been destroyed by fire, and a thousand were left homeless and destitute.

And Chicago's record of tolerance to all comers, a record far higher than average, had been wiped out.

Then there was a stir about the Negro problem. Then there was a commission formed to investigate, to suggest solutions. Then the matter was one no longer left to private philanthropy, but a civic problem. Yes, then, but not before . . .

The race riots were a hideous display of ignorance and crime come to the surface, of lawlessness and destruction and murder openly at work. But this vicious attack upon an unfortunate minority group was a part of that crime wave which, coming as an aftermath of war, Chicago was now to undergo. And, normally, the big city had found crime hard enough to deal with.

"The reputation of Chicago for crime has fastened upon the imagination of the United States as that of no other city has done. It is the current conventional belief that the criminal is loose upon the streets." Those words were written by George Kibbie Turner in an article published in *McClure's Magazine* in 1907.

But the good people of Chicago prepared to battle. In 1919, the Chicago Crime Commission was organized to promote

efficiency in all officers dealing with crime. The Union League Foundation for Boys' Clubs was set in motion with the intention of making better citizens of underprivileged boys.

But they did not yet know what they were up against.

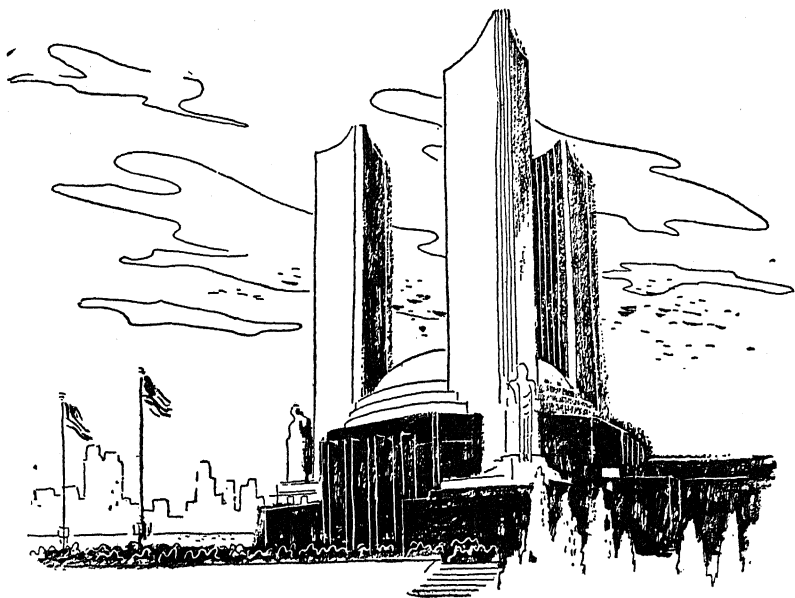
Businessmen had learned the benefits accruing from organization. Labor knew well how organization—when it could be attained—brought benefits. Criminals were now going to bring that force into their own realm. The day of the individual outlaw adventurer had passed. The era of organized crime had begun.

In 1920, Capone came from New York's underworld (for there were underworlds in other cities!) to join Jim Colosimo as a top man in the organization. There was money to be made, big money in a new field—bootlegging.

And while the gangs organized, fighting their own fierce underworld fight for power, holding their astounding and elaborate funerals when one of the mighty among themselves was shot, into Chicago came another man, this one English-born. However bad Chicago's reputation was by now, in two outstanding cases, at the top and at the bottom, it took an outsider to surpass Chicago's native products. The involved and tangled machinations of finance performed by the long-esteemed and apparently impeccable Mr. Insull outdid anything that any Chicago financier of questionable honesty had ever conceived.

Chapter Sixteen

MATCHEMONEDO-KITCHEMONEDO



The Century of Progress

THE repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment was an honest admission by our government that, however fine the conception of prohibition may have been, it was not in accord with the will of the majority. Reform must be achieved by normal processes of enlightenment. It cannot be imposed by force. Coercion creates rebellion, and that was exactly what the Eighteenth Amendment did.

Though many upright and intelligent citizens respected the law, whether or not they found it irksome, the whole

nation was soon treated to the spectacle of a great number of otherwise law-abiding citizens going out of their way to defy it. With many who had hitherto cared little whether or not they drank, to drink became a ritual of protest against what was believed to be a violation of their rights.

But this attitude which sought correction of a law by breaking it, instead of by an orderly attack through democratic processes of law, was a part of a general reaction which had set in following the war.

That reaction, oddly enough, was a sense of having been duped. Exactly what, Americans began asking each other, had been gained by the war? It was a queer question to ask, if one recollects that America had backed out of any responsibility in world affairs, where much *might* have been gained in the way of great influence for good. But a place at the League of Nations had been declined, and the general consensus of opinion was in approval. Yet the question was asked with growing cynicism—what had America got out of it all? It might have been answered that America had not gone into it for other than altruistic reasons, and virtue is its own reward, only that talk was spreading about profits made by munition makers and poor boys dying to make a few more millionaires. And then the stories came out that some of the atrocity tales had been only propaganda to trick Americans, appeal to their better natures, make suckers out of them.

Many Americans were disgusted. The swing back was to the pacifist side and the old reliance on the two wide oceans. Let the rest of the world look after itself. America was going to mind its own business from now on.

The debunking started. Some of it was truth seeking, an honest need to strike at falsity, to bring out clean facts, but soon it spread out in a vast skepticism which made use of ridicule without discernment. Everything became fair game to the debunkers, present morals and past glory. The patriots of the past were without honor. George Washington and his cherry tree was a silly tale for stupid kiddies. The lives

of the captains of industry were Horatio Alger fables for poor dopes to fall for. It became a vogue for the smart, the sophisticated, to dig up any little weaknesses a great man might have had and by their revelation topple the honored figure in the dust. "Wise guy" became synonymous with smart.

The boom years were on. Work was plenty, and wages were up. Prices were high, but people had the money to pay, and if they hadn't, there was the system of installment buying. Mr. Ford had brought the price of cars within the reach of practically everybody. Unskilled laborers piled their families, dressed in silks and satins, into the tin lizzies and thronged the roads on Sundays. Talk about the American standard of living was widespread and jubilant, and the American standard of living meant bathtubs and washing machines and automatic iceboxes and electric sewing machines and cabinet radios—education and culture not included. There were some poor people of course, and among them were teachers and writers and artists. Many of them could not afford "the American standard of living" even in boom time. But money was being made on a big scale, and money was an obsession, a dominating thought. The go-getter in business was an admired hero-type—no questions asked. Why ask questions?—Money talked.

The money lust was in the ascendant.

In Washington, scandal broke out in high government circles, and people said, "Sure, what do you expect?"

And in Chicago, Mr. Insull sat quietly intent and hard at work from seven-thirty in the morning until six at night, his pyramid of power steadily rising, while in the outskirts, in the town of Cicero, Capone pulled the wires that ran about the city in an underworld network and threw banquets in his fortified castle that outdid the Borgias.

Crime and progress went forward side by side. Many and amazing were the contrasts. Strange and complex and varied were the developments.

Building went on in a riot of expansion, smashing through the labor conflicts which arose in the process. The city spread out and up—out into the suburbs where rows upon rows of private dwellings were erected, some decent, homely little affairs professing small-town back yards and foliage, some rivaling each other in a show of means and, often enough, equipped with artificial fireplaces and ingenious private bars. Up into the sky sprouted the city towers, giving testimony to wealth and enterprise. By 1930, there would be over thirty of them above three hundred feet in height. Huge, elegantly appointed hotels sprawled in massive lumps of showy wealth and were rivaled by tall de-luxe apartments with foreign, aristocratic names. Erstwhile ten-cent movies found new quarters in million-dollar palaces, sumptuously fitted, with elaborate stage shows enhancing the film presentation. And everywhere were liveried doormen in uniforms which surpassed even a musical comedy version of an admiral's uniform. The keynote of all of this was a grandiose luxury, a display of wealth, an adoration of money and its works that was shameless in its blatant vulgarity.

And yet . . .

One visit to the new Field Museum of Natural History opened to the public in Grant Park in 1921 would send a visitor away marveling at the intelligence, the taste, the skill, the knowledge that building represented—surely a high testimonial to the city's cultural standing. And other new evidences there were—to speak only of the new—including the fine music festivals held at Ravinia which attracted many. Also on the credit side was the forethought for public welfare in the newly opened parkland of the Forest Preserve, and the dogged persistence with which the struggle to carry out Burnham's plan to beautify the city was maintained.

That was not easy. It involved the condemnation of private property both along the river bank and along avenues which were to be widened. Then there was the Illinois Central with tracks along the lake front to be dealt with. The Illinois

Central and the private owners bickered with the city and many and tedious and costly were the lawsuits. But eventually most of the plan was fought through. The Illinois Central complied with the requirements, and Grant Park became a pleasant place. The trains were electrified, and one annoying source of dirt and noise was done away with. Eventually the old buildings were cleared away, the avenues widened and along the river bank the Wacker Drive took form. From the end of the Municipal Pier, jutting out into the lake beside the river mouth, one might look back upon the shore line and the skyline, the park, the sightly buildings, and take pleasure in the aspect.

Yet this was the city where gang murders were committed in broad daylight on the principal streets, where murders rose in number and court convictions dwindled, where a strange torpor hung over every attempt to prosecute the violators of the law, where the syndicates of crime had connections in the City Hall, where the whole fabric of city government was rotten with corruption.

In 1923, the Better Government Association of Chicago and Cook County was formed . . .

In 1924, a racketeer was murdered, and city officials attended his funeral . . .

What could be done? The voters, the great many, did not seem to care. It was not that they were unenlightened as to what was going on. By now all of the country knew that Chicago was gang-ridden, and the Chicago papers did not shy away from facts. Crime and corruption were no secrets which the citizens had failed to hear about. But when they had a good mayor—Dever—who waded into the mess and started in to clean it up, the people did not re-elect him. William Hale Thompson, who had already proved worse than a failure, was put back in office. And the rackets grew, the gang wars went on, the corruption spread, and Thompson clowned and acted like an ass.

Why didn't the citizens care? Not just a few, but all of

them? Why didn't they care enough to put men out of office who were not only incompetent but corrupt? Didn't it bother them that the reputation of their city was an evil one? That their city, with its bombings and arson and murder, was no longer safe? That their mayor was a laughingstock? That he, in his ignorance, ordered public libraries "cleansed" by stupid zealots who advocated book-burnings, and that he attacked competent educators, censored schoolbooks he was not qualified to judge, made speeches of a phony kind of "Americanism" that were enough to shame anyone who held the country in respect?

Maybe they felt that it was hopeless to even try to break so powerful a political machine, backed up by the underworld, with crooked work going on openly, even at the polls. Maybe the city had grown so big that they felt lost in its impersonal immensity and forgot the power they held of voting strength. Maybe they were too busy making money and tending to their own prosperous affairs to care what went on. People shrugged and said that, anyhow, the gangsters were killing each other off . . .

But they were shocked in 1928 when, on the eve of an election, bombs were exploded at the homes of two anti-Thompson men—Judge Swanson and Senator Deneen. That was going a bit *too* far. Come to think of it, maybe the whole thing had gone too far. Maybe a stop *could* be put to it.

The voters went to the polls in grim earnest.

It was not a quiet election. Every known trick of cheating was attempted. Watchers at the polls were beaten, kidnaped. Cars went through the streets openly armed and with America First stickers on the windshields. Yes, America First was in existence even then, and of course Thompson was for it. According to *Chicago, the History of Its Reputation*, "He claimed that it had, or soon would have, a national membership of 700,000."

But the voters were through with Thompson's machine. His men were not re-elected. And very shortly there were

committees calling on the mayor suggesting that he resign. That he would not do. He stuck out his term of office, but the state of city affairs had reached a low point, and even he could see the old tricks would no longer work. The mismanagement and the graft had piled debt upon debt. In a time of prosperity, when Illinois ranked third in population, manufacturing and wealth, the finances of the great city of Chicago were in a shameful mess.

"The corporate fund, budgeted at over \$59,000,000 out of a total 1928 appropriation of more than \$243,000,000, faced a deficit. So with the water fund, nearly a dozen million to the bad, and the vehicle tax fund. In school finances there was chaos; emergency action to pay teachers' salaries was necessary. And the sanitary district, not a City Hall department but cursed by the machine's influence and by bi-partisan membership, was about to be exposed as the medal winner in padding payrolls, wasting funds, and awarding crooked contracts . . ." we learn from *Chicago, the History of Its Reputation*.

Chicago labored on, still gang-ridden. Temperance forces, who had thought the closing of saloons would put a stop to crime, were rudely confronted by the disorder in Chicago. In 1929, the Valentine Day "massacre" occurred in which seven gangsters were lined up in a garage and killed with machine-gun fire by an opposing gang. Yet, try as they would, knowing that Capone was back of all this, the desperate and now outraged citizens could not get any proof with which to convict Capone, and it was not until 1931 that his power was broken by the roundabout method of indicting him for tax evasion. For that, he went to jail. Repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment took the big profits out of bootlegging, and underworld lawlessness and gang rule withered.

But before that came to pass, other events had taken place which shook Chicago to its foundations.

Going back a bit, it must be reported that a good many

things had occurred which pleased Chicagoans. The first Eucharistic Congress ever held in the United States took place in the city in 1926; Mundelein was then Cardinal. The Soldier Field, a vast stadium, had been erected in Grant Park, and the Goodman Theater had opened as a repertory theater of high standing. The Tribune Tower had been completed—not, however, without some controversy. Prizes had been offered for the best architectural plan, and the first prize had been won by a Finnish architect, Eliel Saarinen—yet it was not his prize-winning design which was accepted in the erection of the building, but the plan which had won second prize. In 1927, the Municipal Airport was opened, and in the same year plans were made for a second Fair to be held in 1933, in celebration of the one hundred years since Chicago's incorporation as a town. "The Century of Progress" was organized and work begun.

But all this time a cold, silent, unsocial being was working steadily to weave a web of power, twisting one strand about another, reaching out further and further, taking in the state of Illinois, moving on into Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, the Mississippi Valley, until finally the mesh of power spread into Maine, into Texas. Samuel Insull sat in the center of the web and tightened the threads here, pulled them taut there, wove them into a filament that gave him power beyond the power of emperors. Public utility holdings were his empire. He had drawn in one after another. To the Chicago Edison, he had added the Commonwealth Edison, and then devised the Middle West Utilities, and then the People's Gas and Coke Co. had been sucked in.

Edgar Lee Masters in *The Tale of Chicago*, says, "Insull was lighting homes, offices and streets; he was running factories; he was supplying gas, ice and heat in 5,000 communities. He had 1,718,000 customers, he employed 32,000 men, and he had 600,000 security holders for his corporations. He manned 324 steam plants and 44,500 miles of transmission wires. He ruled with a despotic hand the domain of gas and

electricity in Chicago; he had the elevated roads in his grip. The surface lines were his, the buses and the central heating. He could throw Chicago into darkness and cold by the wave of his hand . . . The banks of Chicago were dominated by him."

He erected a \$20,000,000 opera house on the bank of the river, an enormous building which served also for business offices and, in addition, provided Mr. Insull with a penthouse suite overlooking his domain. But opera did not flourish under his dictatorship.

Mr. Insull did not like people. He kept away from them. When he rarely ventured into a gathering of businessmen, he held aloof even in their midst, cold and silent and disdainful, never one of them. With his immediate contacts, the men who worked under him, there was no fellowship, and he was known as a hard, merciless driver. Love of humanity was not in him. He hated Jews. He would not have one near him. He was no credit to the country whose accent and whose outward manner he maintained, more alien to the American spirit than many a dweller in the slums who had gained little in material wealth for which to give thanks, and who yet strove hard to be "American," grateful for his citizenship. England has produced many an admirable and worthy specimen of humanity. Unfortunately, Mr. Insull was not one of them.

He incurred the enmity of other men, competitors in his own field, by encroaching on their territory. It was a tactical blunder. An attack on Insull began, a hunt as merciless as any he had ever conducted. His enemies started buying his stocks in such large blocks that control of his corporations began slipping into other hands. Frightened, he bought back—at a heavy cost. This went on, sapping his financial reserves. The attack was directed against his weak point. He did not know the tricks of stock market gambling. He was skilled only in the trickery by which he had erected his pyramid of utility control, and much of that was "paper" power.

In 1929, the stock market crashed, and Insull was called

upon for money—lots of it. He was fighting now with a cold, intense desperation. To maintain his empire, he sapped Chicago banks, drew upon his acquaintances for money, even upon his clerks, and of course upon the public. Thirty thousand employees were made into stock salesmen. With the mighty name of Insull, they drained money out of small investors, those apparently ever-trusting widows with their mites. Panic had come to America, brand new in its immensity, but Insull went on offering wealth, security, using every trick of deceit to catch the pennies. Soft voices on the radio urged the public to trust, to buy . . .

But still, relentlessly Insull's enemies attacked while the whole business fabric of the country quivered and collapsed and bank after bank went on the dustheap.

The game was up. With provident forethought for his remaining days, Insull arranged a modest income of \$18,000 per annum for himself and skipped the country. The giant empire came crashing down—a worthless flutter of paper.

Word reached Insull in Paris that he had been indicted, that he was wanted by the Criminal Court. He slipped on to Greece. Greece had no agreement with the United States by which a criminal might be extradited. He felt safe there among ruins he had not caused.

But the ruin he had caused in Chicago was more gargantuan if not as beautiful to contemplate as those of ancient Greece. Bankers and businessmen cursed his name. The widows wept. Life-savings had been filched from family after family. Havoc had been loosed upon Chicago finance, big and small. This, added to what was happening to the rest of the country, sent some terrified and hope-forsaken people plunging to a swift death, out of a tall tower, or head foremost into the river.

It was bad. Not that there hadn't been depressions all along the line, but none of them had equaled this, and, worse still, there had been no sizable depression for so long a time that people had got out of the habit of expecting them, and the

prosperity had been so lush it just hadn't seemed that it could ever end. That attitude of mind was pretty general. Even the economists, who are supposed to know all about these things, not only failed to sound an alarm in advance but after the collapse had begun, went on making hopeful predictions for a short duration.

Of course, for some people there had always been a depression, right through boom times. Not everyone had the promised two cars in the garage and the chicken in the pot, but this depression did a pretty thorough job of leveling, and even those who still had the pot full and the garage well-stocked were scared. But their fright, real as it was with the coupon-clipping no longer profitable, was nothing as compared to that of the millions of honest and industrious and thrifty middle-class Americans who had lost all that they had saved, and stared at empty days without employment. There were, you remember, thirteen million unemployed.

Terrible times had been endured by the poor in Chicago, but added to that suffering which had come again was the suffering of those new poor who had never dreamed a day would come when *they* would stand in a bread line, when *they* would take charity—or starve. To these, more than to the very poor, was added the tormenting anguish of bewilderment. *How could this come to pass?*

And who would help now? Private charity could not cope with such general misery. If every church in America had flung open its doors and emptied its coffers, the suffering would have remained.

There was only one agency big enough to cope with the situation—the government. And it did. As made-work through government relief lightened the worst suffering and started, if only feebly at first, the wheels of industry to turning, there was a lot of silly, cruel talk about boondoggling and the men who leaned on their shovels. But America today enjoys large benefits that came from the Public Works then undertaken—benefits not only in lives saved and family integrity main-

tained and the odium of charity replaced by that of payment for services rendered and work skills not permitted to deteriorate, but in very large and material benefits to the country as a whole—soil conservation, flood control, dams loosing new and vast currents of energy, slum clearance and housing projects. But the list is interminable—even with the rich cultural nourishment of the Arts Projects left out. Those “leaf-rakers” got a lot done—with Uncle Sammy’s aid. Right now we’re mighty glad those dams are there and that the soil is usable and that work skill has been maintained. We wish we had more resources developed and in working order.

Depression or no depression, Chicago was going to have its Fair . . .

It was shrewdly handled from a commercial sense. Before the depression had been foreseen, the business managers had drawn up their plans and these differed in many ways from those of the previous World Fair. They asked for no federal subsidy, and they gave no prizes. A group of citizens put up the money with a lien on forty per cent of the gate receipts. “Memberships” were sold to the public, and there was an advance sale of admissions. Because it had been cannily plotted, the Fair managed to pull through and run two years, although in neither year did it equal the number of admissions of the Fair of ’93.

It did not rival the wonder and beauty of that first Fair either. The intention, as reported in a paper prepared by the Chicago Association of Commerce, is thus stated: “Every effort was made to show that the progress of the world, and particularly that of the United States, has been largely the result of the co-operation of science and industry.” With due respect to both these fields to which we are indeed greatly indebted, there is something to be said for the debt owed to the men of thought and of art when the progress of the world is considered. Without our philosophers, our thinkers, our educators and our artists, ours would be a poor civilization.

The heavy emphasis that the Fair of '33 placed upon the accomplishments of industry and of science robbed it of the noble breadth of the earlier undertaking in which there had been no "little plans" and the foremost men and women in every field had been invited to collaborate.

Then, too, there was the emphasis upon a balanced budget. The architects of '33 were told to do the job at small expense, and that, however justifiable under the circumstances as they later developed, naturally hobbled invention. Architecturally, the Fair, with its accent on "modern" was disappointing.

Sullivan, long prominent in the history of Chicago architecture, had voiced a credo, "Form follows function." That credo made a deep impression on a young architect who worked in Sullivan's office and was his disciple. Frank Lloyd Wright carried functionalism to a new development. His work was at first considered bizarre and startling. Wright, like many another in the early days, had to go to Europe to win recognition. There the new form was first acclaimed as "Chicago Architecture," but it soon was called "Modern." After European recognition, America acknowledged her own, and the Modern in architecture began to develop.

Wright was an artist and a creator. In what he wrought, the Sullivan principle was accurately observed, and his designs had meaning. But the "modern" architecture of the Fair, like so much that continues to pass for "modern," was a poor imitation, the principle not grasped. Wright, viewing the Fair, said that what was there displayed was just another "style." The imitators had noted that in the Modern there was a use of cubes, so they went in for cubes without giving thought to the principle of "form follows function." Such designing was on a level far below that of the artistic inspiration which had motivated Wright in his design for a residence in which he sought to capture the horizontal lines of the prairie on which the house he designed was to stand. Yet in the architecture of the Fair of '33, there was a value gained in general simplicity, despite a freakishness displayed here

and there, and the whole thing was steadied up by such buildings as the fine Field Museum and the Shedd Aquarium and the Adler Planetarium, which enhanced the grounds. That planetarium, let it be said, was a leader.

In another aspect the Fair fell short. The troubled state of world affairs did not yield a happy participation by foreign countries. The depression visiting itself upon America was part of a world depression which had arrived tardily in this country, crossing that wide ocean which was presumed to be so good a barrier against all harm. Long-suffering European countries were in no mood to take part in the Chicago Fair.

Yet, to speak of the Fair's shortcomings savors of carping when the period is kept in mind. To hold a Fair at all in that depression was a gallant undertaking, and one which gave Chicago some help during the dark days. And if it was not nobly conceived, it had the virtue of honesty. It was an accurate representation of its day, evolved out of the materialistic thinking of the boom period.

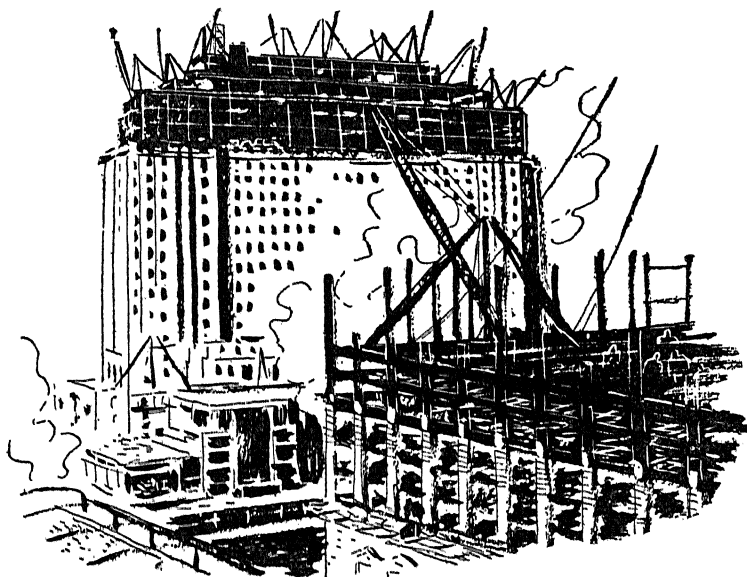
On the record of this Fair also, fire comes in, though tardily. A replica of Fort Dearborn had been built, stockade and all, full size. It was left standing when the temporary buildings were cleared away. But if anyone went looking for it a few years later—well, it had burned down . . . Tramps, maybe . . . Just wood, you see, not fireproofed, nobody around to look after it . . . Yeah, too bad in a way . . .

Another ironical repetition of event took the shape of tragedy . . . In 1893, Chicago's mayor was assassinated as the Fair came to an end. In 1933, Chicago's mayor was assassinated before the Fair opened.

Anton J. Cermak, who had bravely faced the gloomy and tangled mess at City Hall, was shot by a madman while he rode in the car of the President-elect in Florida. He received the bullet intended for that man who was to bring hope to the country in its dark crisis, and who was yet to earn the devotion and the hate which comes to every outstanding leader who seeks to serve his fellow-men.

Chapter Seventeen

WAR CLOUDS



Rimming the river up which Marquette paddled

IN 1932, Franklin Delano Roosevelt had been nominated in the Chicago Stadium. He came to Chicago by plane to accept the nomination. Taking office at a time when the whole country was bogged down with bankruptcy, bewilderment and fear, he enacted emergency measures with a sweep and vigor that re-charged the country's energies.

The preamble to our Constitution outlines the duties of democratic government, and it includes this line, "to promote the general welfare." It was of this the new President

was thinking. Much that he promoted was innovation, and as such met with resistance in some quarters where change was more feared than the existing evils. But change was what the large majority of the people wanted. They did not want to remain in the dreadful quagmire of the depression nor to go back to ways which had mysteriously produced it. Here was a President whose words followed a pattern of democracy which they could understand and whose actions followed swiftly on his words. The spirit of the country stirred forward in hope toward that ever-desired ideal of democracy, as yet so far from realization.

But in the same year of '33 when Roosevelt took office, an ex-corporal of the German army, backed by powerful German cartels, became dictator of Germany.

Chicago tried hard to get up on its own feet, to carry on according to its pattern, but it was a task no big city in America accomplished unaided. The R.F.C. loan of \$22,300,000 to Chicago's schools accomplished only one of many needed works which Chicago could not manage singlehanded.

Yet the record of events in those years has a familiar sound. Work begun on the Merchandise Mart in 1928 was completed in 1930, and the giant building on the river bank lays claim, with true Chicago spirit, to being the largest in point of floor space in the world. It was in 1931 that the Adler Planetarium was dedicated and that the Rosenwald Museum—the perpetuated Art Palace of the Fair of '93—was opened to the public. In 1933, the Illinois Waterway Project opened. A further development of Joliet's vision, this new canal was a 327-mile trade barge route. And '34 saw a stockyards fire that ran to a loss of \$8,000,000.

Another imposing building, rimming that river up which Marquette had paddled, was that of the *Chicago News*, thrice remarkable—for its contribution to Chicago's skyline, for its novel erection (it was the first to make use of "air rights"; it squats upon a nest of railroad tracks) and for its long record

as an employer of notable writers. From the days of Eugene Field on down into the present, such names as Carl Sandburg, Lloyd Lewis, Edgar Ansel Mowrer, and Paul Mowrer, Harry Hansen, Ben Hecht, Sterling North and John Gunther stand out. Other Chicago papers have their notables—Ring Lardner was for long associated with the *Tribune*, but the *News* has been outstanding in this respect.

By 1935, little shopkeepers were tacking up slogan cards, "Wasn't the Depression Awful?" And industry was definitely on the upgrade. The International Harvester Company reported profits of \$3,940,000 for 1934—the first profits in three years. The March sales of Sears Roebuck were the highest in their history. In March, wheat crossed the dollar mark. And in '35, the railroads modestly announced that the running time from Chicago to Los Angeles was fifty-nine hours and twenty minutes. Progress, it seemed, had not been halted, despite the grumbling foreboding that some people voiced about "that man" in Washington.

Organized labor had seen some hard going since the opening of the century, and particularly after the war when the feeling against unions grew strong and attempts were made to curb their growing power. But in 1925, the use of injunctions to restrain peaceful picketing was prohibited. In 1929, state certification was required in the employment of children over fourteen years of age. A minimum wage law for minors and women was put through in 1933, and in 1936 the work-day for women, barring a few branches of employment, was limited to eight hours. In 1937, the Unemployment Compensation Act was passed, to be administered in co-operation with the United States Employment Service and the Social Security Board.

The Committee of Industrial Organization made its first appearance in Illinois in 1935 and set about organizing workers who were not a part of the trade union movement. Assisted by large trade unions, such as the International Ladies' Gar-

ment Workers' Union and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the C.I.O. succeeded in organizing the steel workers. In three out of four of the largest plants in the Chicago area, workers were unionized in the spring of 1937.

But then came tragedy of true Chicago proportions. On Memorial Day, at the Republic Steel Company, ten strikers were killed by police.

A coroner's jury exonerated the police, but a newsreel film had been taken during the disturbance, and on what was there shown the La Follete Senate Civil Liberties Committee severely criticized police action. The "Memorial Day Massacre" went down as another ugly episode in labor history.

Yet the State Guidebook, issued by the Federal Writers' Project in 1939, states: "Illinois has made notable strides in settlement of its labor difficulties . . . It can be truly said that in recent years Illinois has had proportionately less labor strife than any other great industrial state in the Union . . . Both capital and labor have advanced toward a new basis of understanding, and the outlook for the future looks bright."

And a statement recently issued by the Chicago Association of Commerce reads: "The labor record in Chicago has been excellent despite a few spectacular disturbances that flare up. For nearly a decade, the city's portion of the time lost by strikes in the nation has been far lower (one-half or less) than its portion of the number of persons engaged in industry."

President Roosevelt came to Chicago for the dedication ceremonies at the opening of the Outer Drive, a continuation of the Chicago Plan originated by Burnham, who had not lived to see this latest addition.

In his speech, the President spoke out about what was going on in Germany and Italy under the Nazi-Fascist regimes, and he made his disapproval plain.

Chicago listened, intent, and for the most part, amazed.

What did this mean? Embroilment in European affairs? Why, Chicago wanted none of that!

Isolationism became a cause. It drew in many of mixed purpose. Soon "America First" had more followers than even William Hale Thompson, the discredited mayor, had hoped for—followers in every state. Across the country the argument raged, interventionist and isolationist, strong feeling mounting.

Upon a people clambering up out of the depression, their feet once again upon the path of progress, wanting very much to pursue that forward course without interruption, was hurled a bewildering barrage of conflicting appeals of high emotional force, profoundly disturbing, fraught with warnings of danger and calamity—appeals directed to the moral conscience of a nation, appeals directed to the lowest mob emotions.

At the outset, a good many honest, well-meaning and loyal Americans simply did not believe their country was in danger, and they quite firmly believed that war was wrong. That war *is* wrong is a basic idea with which every thinking person will agree. It should have been outlawed long ago. But until world laws to keep the peace have been devised, and methods for their enforcement have been put in operation, war is an evil which may come down on any land, the most peaceloving of them all. Norway is an example. Norway believed in peace. Norway went unarmed. Norway threatened no one. Yet—that didn't keep the Nazis out. Many were the peacelovers in this country who believed, as Norway had, that war need never come to an enlightened country. That some of those peacelovers clung to that belief after Norway fell is proof of the muddled thinking that arose in the isolationist ranks.

Some isolationist leaders undoubtedly were representatives of those honest, if somewhat confused Americans, who believed that peace, in the face of Hitler's avowed program for world conquest, could be maintained. But to their cause came

a treacherous, traitorous support. Into the isolationist group came actual sympathizers with the fascist idea, a dangerous, lunatic element, embittered, irrational, filled with hate, professing an Americanism that was a betrayal of every decent fundamental belief inherent in democracy. And into the isolationist ranks came spies and enemy agents, foreign-born fascists in the pay of fascist countries. The Fifth Column found the isolationist cause a perfect means by which the nation could be weakened and betrayed.

It is not pleasant to think back on the speeches which were made by men who sought to win the public trust by attacking the fundamental doctrines of our republic, as though they were, one and all, the paid hirelings of Hitler or Hirohito. Nor is it pleasant to recall how Bund activities could work in such concord with America Firsters. Nor how men, elected to government posts, could show such criminal negligence for the safety of the nation, opposing every move that was proposed for our protection. Nor how reactionary forces, striving to turn back progress, could seek to confuse and disorder that machinery of democratic government—the public mind, expressive of the will of the majority.

No, it is not pleasant, but it is very necessary. These forces did not commit suicide when war broke out. Some of them are still as actively at work as they now dare to be, and others wait their time for a fresh attack upon us.

How did it come about that the isolationist cause, however innocently it may have started in the days before the facts about our enemies were widely known, could continue to the end to count among its members many who believed themselves to be loyal Americans working for a good purpose?—for without these people the party would have collapsed through sheer lack of numbers.

It is a matter deserving of some speculation in the story of a city, as American as any in the land, where isolationism waxed strong.

Up until the first World War, industrialism had effected little change in accepted ways of thinking. Codes of conduct were established and for the most part unquestioned, their authority respected—even by those who might go outlaw in defiance of them. In the nineteenth century and down into the early part of the twentieth, honor was a code in which men could put faith—with reasonable discounts for what was counted human villainy. A “gentleman’s word” carried weight.

But there was villainy in high places, the more obvious with the coming of an age in which great fortunes could be made overnight and often through resorts to unscrupulous tricks of finance. By the turn of the century a number of voices were raised in denunciation of the hypocrisy and the dirty dealings. These critics were called “muckrakers,” and certainly they did rake up a lot of muck in attacking skull-duggery among the mighty. Ida M. Tarbell’s book on the business methods of Standard Oil revealed much which, to put it gently, was not admirable.

Such revelations shook the faith of the people, who had begun to entertain some doubts themselves. Now these doubts grew, and all leadership was suspect. Many came to mock at the simple old precepts, to smile cynically when a captain of industry declared that honesty and hard work were all a man required to get ahead.

But loss of faith in leadership and in accepted codes is demoralizing. Call it, if you like, the turbulence of a period of growth, but in the attempt to clear away what was rotten and corrupt, skepticism struck without discernment, knocking down fundamental principles of conduct without which no group of men can hope to work together for their mutual benefit. Such expressions as “a gentleman’s word” or “a word of honor” might meet with ridicule, yet the fact remains that if a man’s word cannot be trusted, if no faith can be placed in any statement of intention, then twenty centuries of civ-

ilization have taught us nothing, and it is a rule of dog-eat-dog which we acknowledge.

The muckrakers, in their exposé of what was corrupt, had not issued a proclamation to the people—Go and do likewise. But it was so that many interpreted the findings. Why, indeed, should they keep to the rules when the big guys didn't?

In upon this skepticism came the added cynicism of the debunking years, and then came the widespread breakdown of respect for law which marked the prohibition era when the underworld connections ran to the City Hall. Then there was the rampant materialism of the boom years with the money-lust in the ascendant. To the man in the street it all added up to this—if you made the dough you were a smart guy, and a smart guy was a slick guy. He knew all the tricks of dog-eat-dog and how to get ahead. Sure, beat the other guy to it, never give a sucker a break, put one over on the saps, hand 'em a line of talk, every man has his price, money talks . . . And people were outraged at Insull—not because of what he did, but because he failed.

The skepticism that had a genial note while the money flowed turned sour in the depression. It spread out in a bitter sense of betrayal, of disillusionment. People do not go through a shock of that proportion without injury. A large number of the American people were lost in confusion, not knowing what to believe, or where to turn.

Another factor served to muddle thought—high-powered advertising. The use of words to influence men's minds is nothing new, but when it became big business every psychological trick from seduction to browbeating was employed, and this assault went on continuously from billboards, magazines, radios, until skepticism became a protective necessity. Words didn't mean what they said. Someone was trying to sell you something. Why believe anything you read, anything you hear?

It was in this muddle that a national emergency arose. It was to these many confused, unhappy people that voices

came, counseling this course or that and calling for a decision. Is it any wonder that opinion was divided?

And in Chicago, the ability to think straight on an issue of national importance was certainly not assisted by that powerful isolationist newspaper, *The Chicago Tribune*. The record of this paper, during the days before Pearl Harbor and since, is one utterly repugnant to the fine tradition of our free press. The Union for Democratic Action has issued a pamphlet entitled "*The People vs. The Chicago Tribune*" which charges that **the Tribune** has parroted the Axis propaganda line, that it has plugged for home-grown fascists, that it has betrayed military secrets, and that its policies endanger both the winning of the war and of the peace. The pamphlet contains specific examples of its charges.

Not everyone, of course, abandoned the guidance of moral precepts as a result of the skepticism which came with the new age, not everyone became materialistic in the boom period or lost faith in the country during the depression. But too many people did. At a time of national peril the enemies of America turned words into weapons and many were the gullible, the confused, the faithless, who went floundering under that attack. We must be warned by that experience. We must learn to seek the facts back of the words. We must learn to verify statements before we accept them. Even words honestly spoken may be inaccurate and misleading.

Our government is founded upon principles. Ideas are our rulers, not men. The men we elect to office, not as rulers but as executors, are, in theory, governed by those principles which recognize that honest statement is a fundamental in efficient, co-operative effort.

Language permits mankind to pool knowledge. It has made possible the advance of civilization. Honesty of statement is a concern of the greatest importance. The man who says, "You can't believe anything you read," is not stating a fact.

Statements are made which are accurate and which should be believed. The skeptic who puts no belief in any fact is not playing safe, he is playing fool, for he can then become the dupe of any clever trickster who employs words to play upon his emotions and sweep him into the fascist ranks.

We, as believers in democracy, must realize the responsibility which rests on all of us to think straight. We can do no less and hope to go forward as a free people, progressing toward those ideals of justice and the rights of man which alone hold promise of a good future for us all.

The isolationist-interventionist struggle must have entered into every home in the country, but it was most bitterly waged in Chicago. To that city came speakers for both sides, drawing large crowds of excited, fervent people.

And then, abruptly, it came to an end—

The United States was treacherously attacked by a nation whose envoys were then in Washington, thinking it clever to speak lying words of peace with the planned treachery in mind.

The fooling of the people could no longer be continued. The country was at war.

Chapter Eighteen

YES, THERE ARE REASONS



Most important productive center in the world

FROM papers prepared by the Chicago Association of Commerce, Business Statistics Department—

“Within the 3,000 square miles comprising the Chicago industrial area lies the most important productive center in the world. This is the territory of huge steel mills, meat packing plants, machinery manufactories, petroleum refineries, railroad car shops, chemical plants, foundries, and such—the basic industries that form the very foundation of America’s economic life.

"This area makes nearly one-fifth of the nation's rolling mill and steel products . . .

"Known as the world's greatest meat-packing and transportation center . . . In 1940 the total for all livestock was 9,682,481 head . . .

"The railroad picture is fully as spectacular as the meat-packing industry . . . Chicago is the heart of the great railroad industry of the nation . . . There are 7,850 miles of railroad track in the Chicago industrial area alone. This is greater than the mileage in 39 of the 48 states, and is approximately equal to the total miles of tracks in all of New York state . . .

"Chicago is served by more air lines than any other American city. Eight principal air lines connect Chicago directly with every major city on the North American continent . . . The Chicago Municipal Airport, busiest in the world, had 25,496 arrivals and 25,704 departures of commercial airplanes in 1940, or an average of more than 140 a day . . .

"The significance of water transportation is indicated by the record 35,500,000 tons of Chicago district lake traffic in 1940 and the 7,000,000-ton traffic on the Illinois waterway. This is more than the traffic passing through the Panama Canal . . .

"Petroleum refining is another leading industry in the Chicago area. Chicago boasts the world's largest complete refining unit and in addition is a center for research in petroleum . . . It is logical that chemical manufacture should be on a large scale in Chicago . . .

"The Middle West is one of the most fertile areas in the world and one of the richest in mineral wealth. Illinois stands third among all coal-producing states . . . Iron ore, clay, sand, gravel, limestone, lumber and other basically important raw materials likewise have been close at hand or readily transportable to Chicago's industries . . .

"Foresight has continued to play a dominant role in Chicago's industrial progress. Among the modern examples of

foresight are the zoning ordinances setting aside large and desirable areas for the erection of manufacturing plants.

"An even better example of constructive civic steps is the vocational training provided in the Chicago school system . . . A large force of highly skilled labor, and facilities for training many more skilled men, have been compelling reasons for the choice of Chicago as the site for two new airplane engine plants. The Buick Motor Division of the General Motors Corporation is building a \$31,000,000 plant in which complete aviation engines will be produced . . .

"Leading civic, business and labor organizations, educational institutions and agencies of the federal government are working closely together to assure Chicago a continued adequate supply of skilled workmen . . .

"Twenty universities and colleges conduct research in the Chicago area . . . The scientific museums, too, have been found extremely helpful to business even though their primary purpose has been to advance the cultural progress of the city. The specialized knowledge gained by the scientists attached to the museum . . . has been available to industry. Alert industries keep in touch with scientific organizations such as the Field Museum . . ."

Chicago's Population Growth:

1830	.....	50	1900	. 1,698,575
1840	.....	4,470	1910	. 2,185,283
1850	.....	29,963	1920	. 2,781,705
1860	.....	109,290	1930	. 3,376,438
1870	.....	298,977	1940	. 3,396,808
1880	.....	503,185	1942	. 3,478,971 (estimate)
1890	.....	1,449,850		

This is the city now engaged in the war effort!

From an article in *Commerce, Business Voice of the Middle West*, March, 1943:

"The greatest concentration of heavy industries in the world, represented by the Chicago district's manufacturing resources, became in 1942 the country's foremost concentration of war-useful agencies of production. The manner in which these agencies, and the lighter industries adaptable to war work, responded to the national needs constitutes one of the great chapters of American economic history . . .

"Production figures give only a partial measure of Chicago's effort and achievements in the first full year of war. Many 'war-derived problems,' as a leading industrialist put it, were accepted as merely another challenge, another opportunity to demonstrate that American industry has the 'know-how' to cope with any difficulty . . .

"Indications of success in meeting responsibilities are the numerous awards of the Army-Navy "E" pennant to Chicago area industries for outstanding performance . . ."

Sounds like the old booster spirit, doesn't it? And sounds mighty good right now!

Out they come—tanks, tank armor, tractors, half-track cars for anti-tank guns, bombs, mortars, torpedoes, howitzers, trench mortars, shells of various calibers and sizes, motors, Diesel engines for the Navy, Diesel engines for aircraft power units, aircraft major sub-assemblies, mine-laying craft, submarines, mass production of cargo planes, electronic products, chemicals, freight cars for the Army, the Navy—the list goes on and on, not including foodstuffs for the fighting men, for the nation, for our allies—

And not including the men themselves.

Chicago is doing the hard, ugly job that must be done, and doing it well.

You see the young men marching, drilling, passing by in squads, books under their arms, down at the Midway by that long impressive row of grave and charming Gothic buildings of the University of Chicago. You see them moving in formation along the streets that pass between that imposing

cluster of buildings, branch of the Northwestern University, standing on made-land not far from where old Kinzie's log house stood. You see them streaming out of the Stevens Hotel on Michigan Avenue which has been requisitioned for war use, crossing over to Grant Park, and here, too, there is made-land, the shore line extended. There, in the city's "front yard," the young men mass and drill in the wide level space bordered by the many-colored, moody beauty of the great lake.

There they can see their city—see what it is they're fighting for, store up the visual image, get the feel of what lies back of that, send memory and imagination wandering across the town, across the years, over the accumulated, stored impressions.

The big city is spread out before them, the center of it facing to the park. Back of that sheer front wall of buildings rising from Michigan Avenue lies the Loop, the hurry going on along the crowded streets, those police whistles which start on one note and drop to another sounding the traffic changes. It's a grimy city still, in its center, the bulky, massive buildings grim and dark, some of them large enough to take a whole block to themselves, solid testimonials to enterprise in the field of commerce, trading such as John Kinzie could not have conceived. Far, far back the city spreads across the level plain beyond the South Branch of the river—so many neighborhoods, so many little houses, homes.

Up close in the front wall are old familiar buildings. There is the Auditorium still standing firm above ground, despite those nightmares Architect Sullivan once had! There is the Congress, once famous for its "Peacock Alley," its fountains, its Pompeian Room. There is the Diana atop Montgomery Ward's, and there stands Orchestra Hall, and further along, that large, dark-toned pile, the Public Library.

Pride shows in the newer buildings close by the river, where once Fort Dearborn stood—more dress to them, more aspiring height, the architecture on the side of show. Michigan Avenue

passes in elegance over the fine bridge with its sculptured bastions and on between those bright buildings, the rich and tasteful shops, encountering that relic of pre-fire days, the old Water Tower. Chicagoans are vexed that it should get in the way, yet they are loathe to part with it. On past old houses, once just what was right in the way of comfortable, well-to-do homes and not without a lasting charm, passes Michigan Avenue, and on past the University buildings and the big Gold Coast hotels, on into Lake Shore Drive and Lincoln Park. Those high towers by the river have grace, seen from Grant Park, and far to the south another cluster rises, fairylike with distance, so much of lake and sky between. The Hyde Park area has its modern development, big apartments and hotels, skyscraper height. Beyond them lies Jackson Park with its lagoons and lawns and wooded slopes, so beautifully landscaped back in '93, site of that famous fair.

Standing there in the center, thought can make the trip along the sweeping drives connecting park with park, encircling the city, running by playgrounds, beaches, and encountering a notable profusion of good statues, in large part made possible by the B. F. Ferguson fund. Thought can reach out further to the vast beautiful woodland of the Forest Preserve to the west, can recall idyllic days of early spring and prairie flowers beside the wandering Des Plaines . . . Aux Plaines, the first townspeople called it . . .

Round about the young men drilling there are big buildings scattered, small in that space, buildings that are largely gifts made to the people of the city by Chicago men of wealth and public spirit—great storehouses of the truth and beauty wrought by science and art, free institutions, untampered with by any of the crushing, ignorant dictates of the fascist fear that dreads the searchings of the free mind and the soaring spirit, distorting science, prostituting beauty. No vandalism of murderous fools has wrecked this garnering of the heritage of centuries.

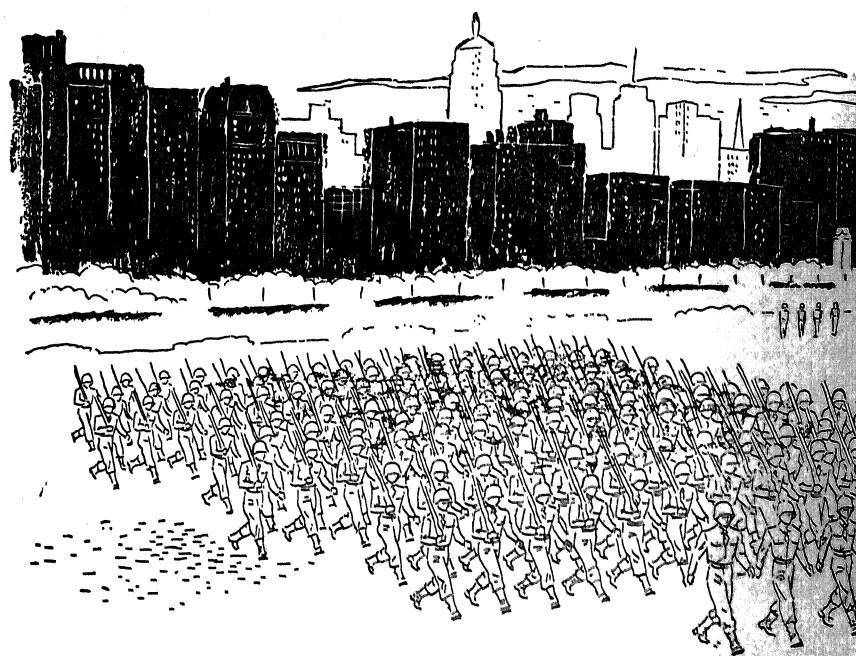
These institutions give a reason to the drilling. . . .

One building sets forth its purpose so: "It is the primary mission of the Field Museum of Natural History to disseminate knowledge of the world we live in to all classes of people. Thus it may be regarded as a people's university for the promotion of education and the increase of culture."

I think that one must go to Chicago to see how well that mission can be carried out, with what excellence and artistry the subject matter is displayed, what taste and skill has been employed to make this "people's univeristy." You would have heard a lot about it if this achievement had been carried out in some far-off land beyond the sea—or under other than a capitalistic system!

Not far away an older building stands. For long it stood alone, the only building in Grant Park, the only building in that central section to be placed on the east side of Michigan Avenue, and there it sat, confronted by the whole city, defying it unaided. Institute of Art, Mecca throughout the Middle West for years back, how many have gone up your steps, thrilling in expectation, and come out altered, having a new beauty-gained strength within them! True Chicago citizen, the Institute can lay claim to having the largest art school in the country, but it can lay claim to far more than that, with its fine permanent collections, its varied exhibits, and its well-devised, intriguing guides to art appreciation. There are some museums that haughtily display the best with an air of "It's really up to you, you know, make what you can of it, that's your affair. You're *supposed* to know, and if you don't—" The sentence ends with a disdainful shudder. Not so friendly Chicago, earnest in intent, *wanting* people to join in the experience, to share in the mysteries. Here is a room with charts and diagrams which give an explanation to this basic element of form or that, and a tour of the room is better than a lecture.

The Institute has this to say for itself: "During the war, the Art Institute plans to increase its public services rather than to curtail them. It believes that these galleries contain



The young men drill

works of art which will bring joy and satisfaction to hundreds of thousands of our citizens during one of the most crucial periods in our national history. It reaffirms the inspiration and delight to be found in art and promises its utmost to extend the knowledge of these things to our visitors."

Across the street, shouldered into that unbroken line of buildings, stands Orchestra Hall. The Chicago Symphony Orchestra is now in its fifty-third season of unbroken service in the maintenance of the high standards of musical excellence. The precious heritage of the world's great music comes to life and is made known to the people, week after week throughout the seasons. Man has done much that is tinged with wonder, but surely of all the excellent co-operative efforts, that skilled harmony of the good orchestra, so many artists made into one unit of expression, ranks at the top in civilization's cultural attainments. And this institution, like



the others, has been made possible by those Chicagoans of means who want their city to be thus enriched.

Further along the Avenue, centrally located like the others, stands the Public Library, but one branch of many scattered through the city, a free institution such as every city in the States possesses, a function in harmony with democratic belief, commonplace enough and long taken quite for granted. Here come the children and the scholars, the poor and the rich, entering into that vast realm of pooled knowledge made possible by words—knowing the delight of vicarious experience, wandering off in realms of fact or fantasy, into one century or another, availing of the privilege of knowledge which is theirs by right, the way we look at things.

The young men drill in the open field beside the lake, before the city, and the houses of Science, Art, Music, Literature and Commerce stand about them, giving reasons. This is civilization. This must be preserved . . . And in the hearts of

many there is yet another reason. Memory goes back to the hours of worship, knit in with the family ties—the Cathedral, the Church, the Synagogue . . .

So much, so long taken for granted . . . That it should be threatened now!

Yes, there are reasons, many of them.

That booster spirit . . . How it has made us laugh or frown when some city patriot began to pour out facts—"Sears Roebuck, largest firm of its kind in the world; Three Saruk rugs in the Stevens, worth \$75,000; Buckingham Memorial Fountain, Grant Park, cost \$700,000; Cook County Hospital, largest medical center, investment, \$14,000,000—"

Or the list of notables, Chicago-born or long identified with the city—"Donald Culross Peattie, naturalist; Flo Ziegfeld, glorifier of the showgirl; Jane Addams, humanitarian idealist; Charles G. Dawes, banker and vice-president; John Alden Carpenter, composer; Harold Ickes, reform politico; Carl Sandburg, poet and biographer; Doris Humphrey, dancer; John Dewey, America's outstanding educator and philosopher—" The list goes on and on, requiring a "Who's Who . . ."

The booster levels vary. Some quote stockyard figures. Some tell of art exhibits. Some have slum clearance facts. And some, you might think, have none of the booster strain—until you hear them speaking in quiet voices on behalf of a worthy cause and into the talk will come a phrase, "For the honor of the city."

Boosters? Yes, you can pin that on Chicagoans—remembering that all inhabitants of a community are boosters if they care what happens to the place they live in and think it lies within their power to make something better of it. And I'd put the knockers right in with the boosters. They care, too. Very little of Chicago's boosting is blind praise. Those who will praise one aspect will damn another.

But the Chicago spirit has this merit: the sense of having

accomplished something leads naturally right on into yet more accomplishment. It begets that confidence and hope that hurries progress.

A city for free men . . . Too free, it sometimes seemed, what with the fierce competition that rioted unchecked in the early days of the young industrialism, and the labor turmoil, the bombs, the massacres, and then the corruption and the crime. Yet, out of that freedom, growth and progress. Up from the bottom, out of the melting pot, a man like Altgeld who could blaze a trail that led on and on, long after his feet had ceased to lead . . . No, not *too* free—not free enough! It was the obstacles which freedom faced which made the progress slow, the obstacles of poverty, of ignorance, of power-greed, and the money lust, the loss of guiding principles.

The good work so far from done angers the heart and makes it heavy with a raging sorrow. You would think by now—! The citizens, still in such numbers unaware of their own building power for civic good, so unaware that theirs is the responsibility to know, to understand, to choose good men for public offices . . . A newspaper blatting in a way to make your hair stand upright, weaving webs of confusion . . . A mayor and a city government . . .

"I was needing an operation for three years but I couldn't get into the County Hospital . . ."

"Education is in the hands of the politicians . . ."

"Say, he'll never get the appointment—he's only a Negro!"

"Of course there's no *profit* in these new housing projects. They require an initial investment—"

"Oh, it's the same old machine politics! What's the use?"

The voices go on . . .

Yet better this struggling, fuddling turmoil which moves so surely forward through the years than that any power group should seek to shape the destinies of all by forcing

them into a pattern in which freedom would be destroyed.

Slow going? Progress looks slow when viewed close up, but see what a long way this youngest of great cities came in such a little time, meeting with what disasters, confusions, conflicts!

Progress slow? Recall what Burnham said: "Remember that our sons and our grandsons are going to do things that would stagger us."

But recall, too, what Altgeld said: "The generations to come will care nothing for our warehouses, our buildings or our railroads, but they will ask, what has Chicago done for humanity, where has it made man wiser or nobler or stronger; what new thought or principles or trust has it given to the world?"

We do not know what things our sons and our grandsons will do. Could Kinzie have foreseen this city? Can we foresee the city of the future? We know the material progress has been great. But we know this also—material progress is not enough. A city is something more than a business establishment. It is the dwelling place of men. That dwelling place must be adapted to the needs of man, all of them. It must be a house in which he feels at home. And man, full-grown, is many-sided. The core of his being is a thinking-feeling self—emotional, intuitive, contemplative, spiritual. And all the adroit mechanisms of our material progress are minutiae in the progress of man toward that full growth of mind and spirit that the human being can attain.

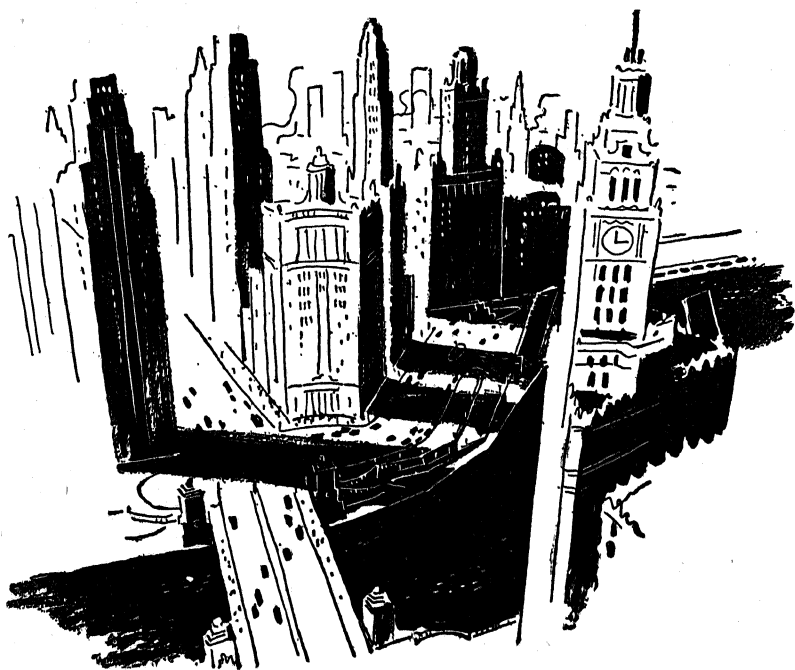
Chicago has done things. Chicago knows she can do things. What things Chicago elects to do in the future rests with those people in whom the spirit of enterprise—in its broadest sense—still has its pioneer energy.

"After all," you'll hear a Chicagoan say, "it's still a pioneer town."

It is. And so is every city in the world today, a pioneer town on a new frontier, the horizons vanishing, the wilderness of world relationships coming right up to the Town Hall steps.

Well, you know the motto of Chicago—"I WILL." It's a good motto for free people. May that freedom be fully realized with justice for all and opportunity made equal in a world without horizons where all men accept their joint responsibility for a future of enduring peace and progress going on to greater goals than those we have achieved.

"Aim high in hope and work . . ."



CHICAGO. . . .

You have grown big with an almost terrible American splendor—and in so short a time! Yes, short; until men christened you a town and pitched in to go to work on the idea in earnest, your spirit slept. Yet the first white man to come upon you and record the fact foresaw your future.

How swift the growth! Musing, the ghost voices of the past come in a rush, jumbling together—

Kitchemonedo, Spirit of Good . . . Matchemonedo, Spirit of Evil . . .

The Indians gave names—Eschicagou . . . Shekagong . . . Chicagou . . .

Big water, wind-whipped, beating on a sandy, desolate waste, the deep, full silence made of quiet noises, wind-rustle

and small scurries in the grass under the vastness of the shining sky.

And then—Joliet is talking:

“—a very great and important advantage that, perhaps, will hardly be believed. It is that we could go with facility to Florida in a bark and by very easy navigation. It would only be necessary to make a canal by cutting through—”

The canal! Slab City. City in the Mud. Pine Town. Queen City of the Lakes. Boss Town. Porkopolis. Smoke and Steel—Chicago! Watch her go, like wildfire, like the wind—

“—by cutting through but half a league of—”

Hardscrabble. Hurry-scurry. Slam bang. Venture. Violence. Blood-cost. Freedom. Opportunity. Hang the cost! Why, see here, in five years, in ten years—

Pa-ea-ma-ta-be, that white man the Indians called the Swift Walker, comes in. The wagons come in. The boats come in. The railroads—north, east, south, west. And the corn—the cattle—the wheat—the people—

“Down in Kentucky, we—”

“Back in Boston, we—”

“Oh, Paddy dear, and did you hear—”

“Ach du lieber Augustine—”

“Way down upon the Swanee—”

Swiftest growth of a big city in history, yes, sir! Population in 1830, fifty souls; population in 1850, 29,963 people; population in 1870, 298,977; population—

The boosters are talking:

“The Manifest Destiny and high office of the splendid granary of which Chicago is the brilliant center—”

“Genius is but audacity and the audacity of Chicago has chosen a star—”

“Finest city on God A’mighty’s earth—”

The biggest in the world. The largest of its size. The tallest in the States. The greatest in the U. S. A. The finest of its kind. Cost, \$25,000. Cost, \$50,000. Cost, \$100,000—

And Burnham said: "Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood—"

Blood on the Black Road—Strike!—Scab!—Riot! 10,000 unemployed. 20,000 unemployed. Crime Rampant! Martial Law Declared!

"—make big plans, aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble and logical diagram—"

"In Hank North's saloon throughout the winter he has given away an average of about thirty-six gallons of soup and seventy-two loaves of bread every day—"

"My dear, she has a gold dinner set which Napoleon gave to the Princess—"

News Item: Capone Eats Off Gold Plates!

And Burnham's words go on: "—let your watchword be 'order' and your beacon 'beauty—'"

Fire—Fire—Fire. Firearms, firewater, firebrands—

"If you think that by hanging us you can stamp out the labor movement, then call your hangmen. But you will tread upon sparks. Here and there, behind you, in front of you, everywhere flames will spring up."

And Lindsay sang:

"Sleep softly . . . eagle forgotten . . . under the stone . . ."

And Sandburg cried:

"It is easy to die alive."

And a great man spoke:

"That is the real issue. That is the issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between two principles—right and wrong—throughout the world."

Matchemonedo, Spirit of Evil . . . Kitchemonedo, Spirit of Good . . .

Eschicagou . . . Shecagong . . . Chicago . . .

CHICAGO'S POPULATION GROWTH

1830	50	1900	1,698,575
1840	4,470	1910	2,185,283
1850	29,963	1920	2,781,705
1860	109,290	1930	3,376,438
1870	298,977	1940	3,396,808
1880	503,185	1942	3,478,971
1890	1,449,850		(estimate)

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Governors of the State of Illinois

<i>Year</i>	
1818	Shadrach Bond
1822	Edward Coles
1826	Ninian Edwards
1830	John Edwards
1834	William L. D. Ewing (act.)
1834	Joseph Duncan
1838	Thomas Carlin
1842	Thomas Ford
1846	Augustus C. French
1853	Joel A. Matteson
1857	William H. Bissell
1860	John Wood (act.)
1861	Richard Yates
1863	Richard Yates
1865	Richard Oglesby
1869	John M. Palmer
1873	Richard Oglesby
1873	John L. Beveridge
1877	Shelby M. Cullom
1883	John M. Hamilton
1885	Richard Oglesby
1889	Joseph M. Fifer
1893	John P. Altgeld
1897	John R. Tannèr

Year

1901	Richard Yates
1905	Charles S. Deneen
1913	Edward F. Dunne
1917	Frank O. Lowden
1921	Len Small
1929	Louis L. Emmerson
1933	Henry Horner
1940	John H. Stelle
1941	Dwight H. Green

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